BIG WHEELS P. 10 • LEARNING TO LOVE LAS VEGAS P. 14

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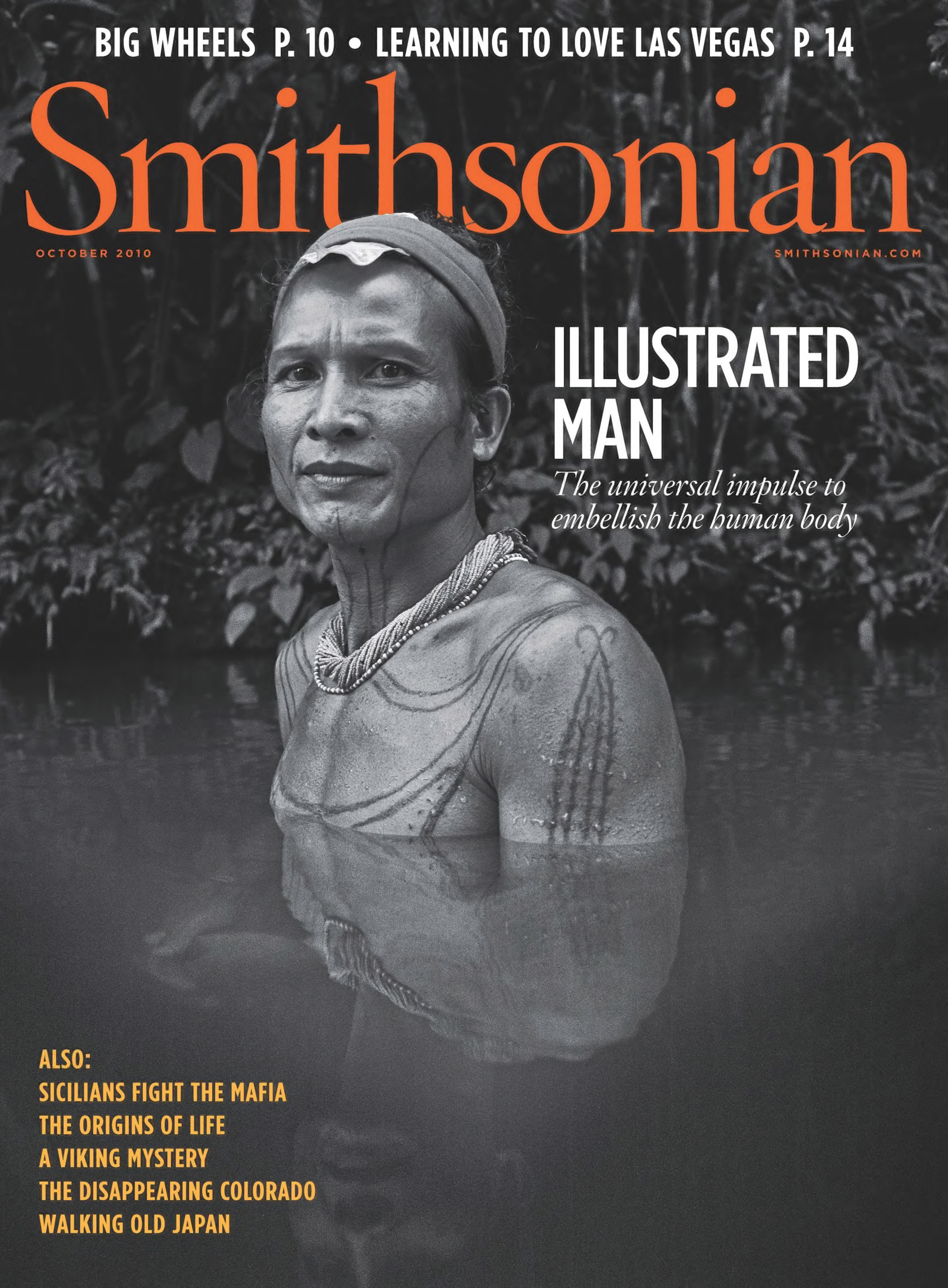

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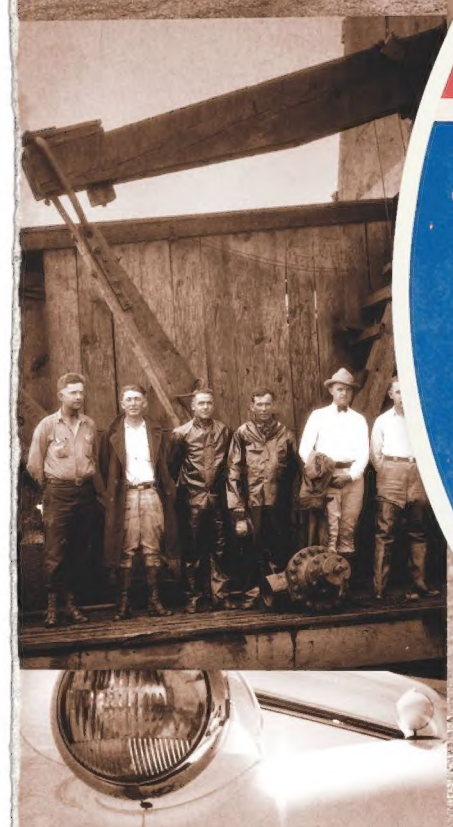

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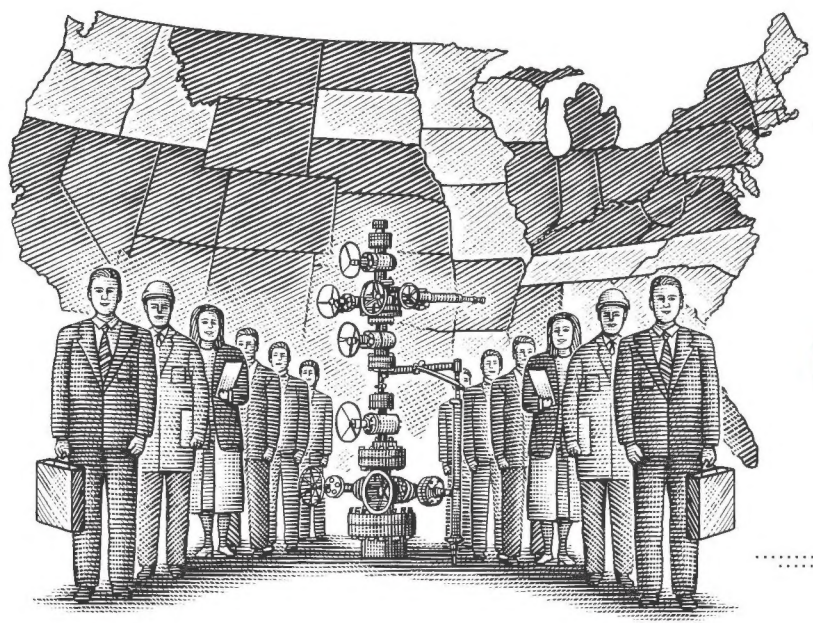

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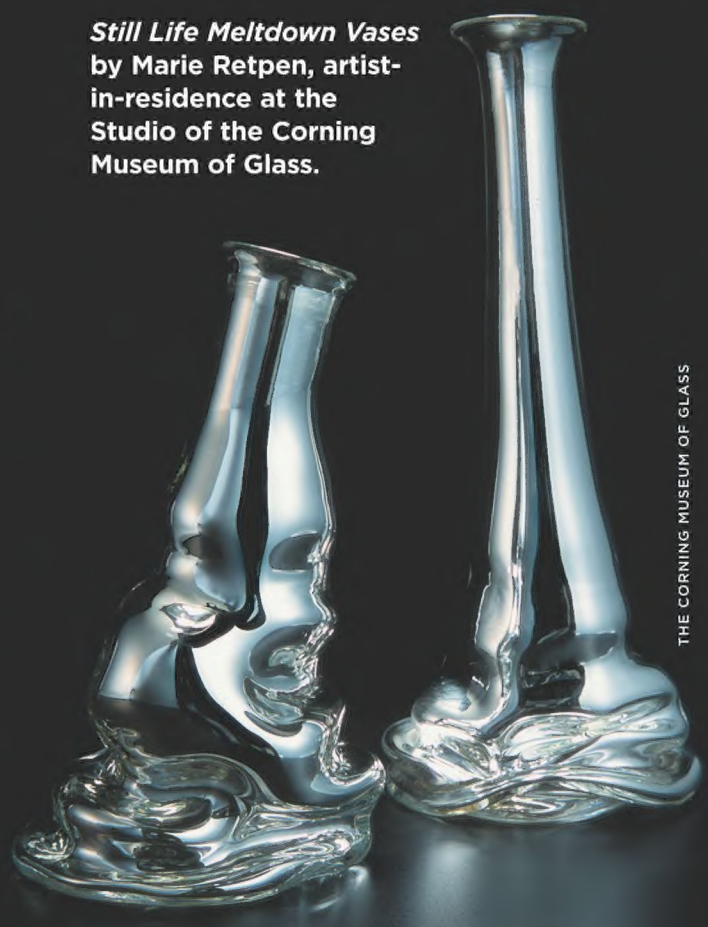
Still Life Meltdown Vases **by Marie Retpen, artist-in-residence at the Studio of the Corning Museum of Glass.**



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LETTERS

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

ALL LIFE-FORMS live because of their ability to adapt to their environment. "Coldblooded Rescue" [May 2010] reports another case of well-meaning humans adapting the environment to suit

the limited survivability of endangered sea turtles. As the turtles continue to breed, they will continue to get trapped in Cape Cod Bay. Rescuers are making the turtles' survivability dependent on them. We need to respect Darwin.

WAYNE GONZALEZ
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

ALTERED MEMORY

KARIM NADER'S BELIEF that the act of remembering can change our memories ["Making Memories," May 2010] echoes E. L. Doctorow in *The Waterworks*: "Remembrances take on a luminosity from their repetition in your mind . . . what you remember as having happened and what truly did happen are no less and no more than . . . visions."

CHARLES THOMAS
MIDLAND, TEXAS

HIDDEN HAZARDS

ABIGAIL GREEN'S Last Page essay ["Green Eggs and Salmonella?" June 2010] is a wonderful tour of must-read children's literature. I hope her concerns about the hazards in the stories are meant as whimsy. Children are being smothered by virtual entertainment and controlled environments. Their stories should spark the imagination, fire the thirst for adventure and fan the flames of independence. Put that party hat on, drive up that giant tree (the car has a seat belt) and get going, you crazy dogs!

KEITH BLODGETT
MESA, ARIZONA

CUSTOMIZED ORGANS

THE ARTICLE ABOUT tissue engineering ["Organs Made to Order," July/August 2010] was an inspirational look at what scientists are capable of. Who would have thought that crazy, space-age ideas like growing back a limb might someday become reality?

AMBER N. MIDDLEMISS
WYOMING, MICHIGAN

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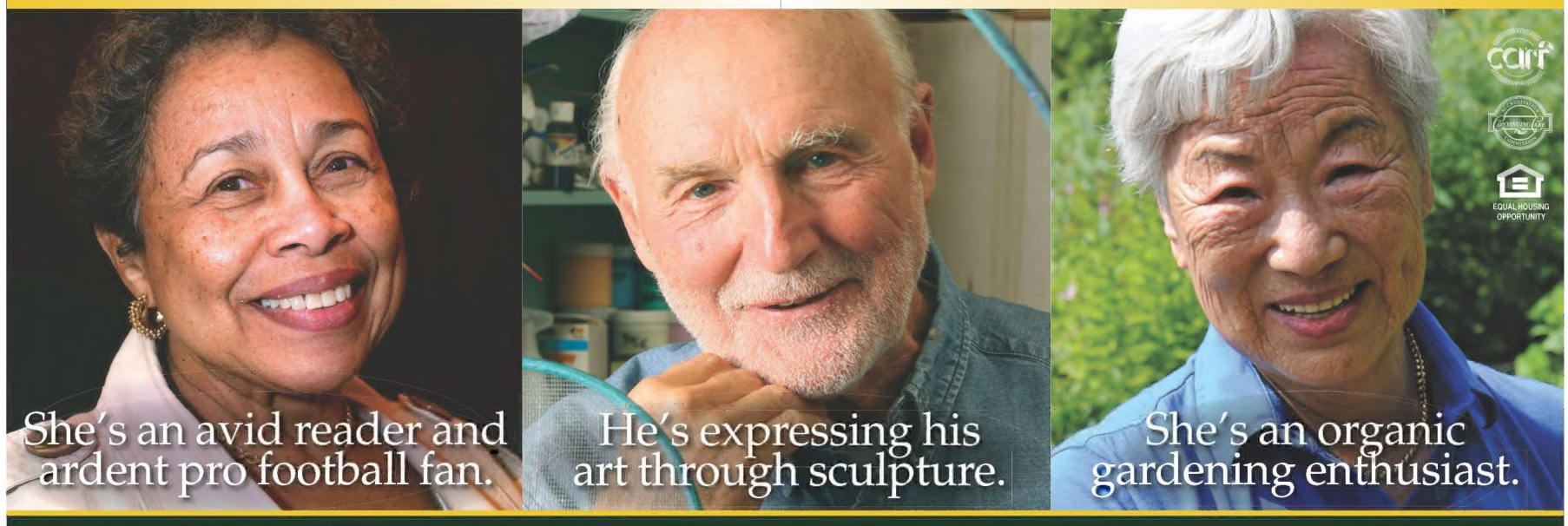
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FROM THE EDITOR

Walks of Life

Brass bands and slow travel

BY CAREY WINFREY

FREELANCE WRITER Helen Fields says the stories she most likes to report are about how science actually gets done—"how it works and the people who do it. I think science often seems like these grand ideas are handed down from on high," she says. "But they come from people with dogs and kids and interests."

Interests, that is, in things like trilobites and brass bands, both of which have fascinated mineralogist Bob Hazen, whose day job is trying to figure out how life itself began billions of years ago and about whom Fields writes in this issue ("Before There Was Life," p. 48). One of the many things that intrigued her about Hazen's chosen endeavor was "that there's no agreed upon definition of life. It's just one of those things that, like pornography, you know it when you see it."

Fields: No definition of life

THOMAS SWICK spent nearly 20 years as the peripatetic travel editor of the *Sun-Sentinel* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. But in 2008, he traded gainful employment for the freelancer's lot and hit the road full time. Many of his travel essays have been collected in his book *A Way to See the World*. "I think my purpose is to let people see a place through my eyes, or, better still, through the eyes of the people I meet."

For "A Walk Through Old Japan," p. 76, Swick joined his friend Bill Wilson, a translator of Japanese and Chinese literature, on an 11-day walk along the Kiso Road, part of an ancient route linking Tokyo and Kyoto. "I've always been drawn to unsung places," says Swick. "The Kiso Road definitely fit that description. The idea of slow travel also appealed to me—of just really taking your time. You can't slow travel down any more than by walking."

The trip fulfilled Swick's expectation to visit a "part of Japan that I hadn't seen and most Westerners don't see." But he also found the unexpected. "I've always known that the Japanese are very polite and gracious. But the little moments and gestures that came out of the blue really touched me—like a gas station attendant bowing to me as I walked by. Elderly women had these beautiful smiles, and there just seemed to be something very warm about the way they welcomed us and sent us off. I was very touched by all of that."

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WILD THINGS

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

BY T.A. FRAIL, MEGAN GAMBINO, LAURA HELMUTH, JESS RIGHTHAND AND ABIGAIL TUCKER

BEAK PERFORMANCE

Imagine a creature the size of Big Bird, but with a sharp beak and a less sunny disposition. Such "terror birds" stood up to seven feet tall and roamed South America for more than 50 million years, until they became extinct a few million years ago. Studying the 15-inch-long skull of the mid-size *Andalgalornis* (inset: a computer-enhanced fossil), scientists from Argentina's National University of La Plata and elsewhere say the fowl wielded its hooked beak like a pickax, hacking away at its prey.

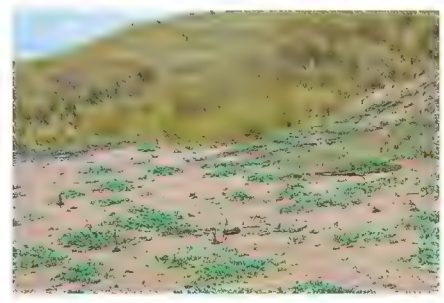
A GUTSY NEW WAY TO GET AROUND

Caterpillars appear to walk in a wavelike motion that starts with their back legs and moves forward. But to the surprise of scientists from Tufts University and elsewhere, the insect gets going when it suddenly thrusts its innards forward; the rest of its body, 16 legs included, catches up like the end of a slinky. The scientists learned this from X-rays of hawkmoth caterpillars in action. They suggest that a similar mechanism—"gut sliding," they call it—propels other caterpillars. It's "unlike any form of legged locomotion previously recorded."

WHALE SONG UPDATE

Male blue whales off the coast of California sing a drawn-out note pitched four octaves below middle C. San Francisco State University scientists now say such a singing whale may be relying on the phenomenon called the Doppler effect to inform others, especially females, of its location. If other whales perceive the tone as rising, they know they're moving closer to the source; if the pitch seems to be falling, they know they're moving away.

ENEMY SHELTER



Invasive species can harm native species by commandeering food or habitat. Washington University researchers have now documented a less familiar type of threat on the dunes of Point Reyes National Seashore in California. An invasive beach grass (background) spreading along the coast is helping to destroy an endangered native plant called Tidestrom's lupine (foreground) by providing new shelter for mice, which feast on the lupine seeds.

Observed

Watch a frog belly-flop at Smithsonian.com/WildThings

NAME: *Leiopelmatidae*, a family of primitive frogs native to New Zealand.

LEAP: By extending their hind legs, like other frogs.

LAND: On their bellies—unlike frogs that evolved more recently, which land on four feet to absorb the shock.

LESSON: If a group of primitive frogs belly-flops, it suggests that the common ancestor of all frogs did as well. In other words, "frogs evolved jumping before they perfected landing," according to the study by Richard Essner of Southern Illinois University and others. As for *Leiopelmatidae*, he says, "these guys are small, so bad landings aren't as big of a deal."

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Sure Shot

Bill Owens was seeking a fresh take on suburban life when he spied young Richie Ferguson

BY OWEN EDWARDS

BILL OWENS spent the late 1960s and early '70s as a photographer for the *Livermore Independent News*, a thrice-weekly newspaper serving towns and communities east of San Francisco Bay, some of which were being swallowed by new housing developments. In those clusters of cookie-cutter tract houses, freshly painted and sodded, Owens faced a daunting task.

"I worked all week taking pictures for the newspaper, which often sent me to places where there weren't any images," Owens recalls. "But I still had to come back with a picture."

Over time, Owens got to know the people in the new houses, and he discovered their devotion to the American dream—"three kids, the dog, the station wagon, the boat," as he puts it. On weekends, he made pictures for himself—most of them portraits that reflected that dream. Or not. "I would go to houses in the East Bay where sometimes there was just no picture," he told me. "I thought of those as 'friend stops.'"

One day in 1971, he was leaving just such a stop in the town of Dublin when he spotted, in the next-door driveway, a crew-cut kid in cowboy boots riding a Big Wheel and holding a plastic rifle. He recognized the lad as 4-year-old Richie Ferguson. "The body language is just right," Owens would later tell an interviewer, "and I didn't pose him. I just said, 'Richie!'—bang, took the picture—and you're done."

"He was just a guy taking pictures," says Ferguson (left: in 1971) of Owens (above: in a 1976 barbershop self-portrait). Says Owens: "I just said, 'Richie!'—bang, took the picture."

The Ferguson portrait became one of the most evocative images in *Suburbia*, a collection Owens published in 1972 to considerable acclaim. (Most recently, the picture was added to a new edition of Ken Light's *Witness in Our Time: Working Lives of Documentary Photographers.*) Soon private collectors and museums, including the Museums of Modern Art in San Francisco and New York City, were buying his work. Within the decade two sequels, *Our Kind of People* (1975) and *Working (I Do it for the Money)*(1977), followed. Owens is a "keen and sympathetic observer of the daily rituals of life amid tract homes," the *Los Angeles Times* later wrote.

His portraits were not news, but given the style and the subject matter, they were definitely new: they personalized a national aspiration and gave treeless neighborhoods the feeling of pioneer settlements. The décor might seem odd and the subjects might appear a bit disoriented, but the pictures have a relaxed intimacy that invites the viewer to look these new suburbanites in the eye, not down at them.

Owens, who is now 72, grew up on a farm in Citrus Heights, near Sacramento. Coming from the same sort of agricultural community that the new developments were devouring, he might have resented their upwardly hopeful inhabitants, but he says he didn't.

"My parents came through the Depression," he told me. "They weren't judgmental people, and I guess that was passed on to me." Plus, his influences—Lewis Hine, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee and Arthur Rothstein, as well as Edward Steichen's landmark 1955 "Family of Man" exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York—were acutely empathetic.

Owens came to photography in a roundabout way: after flunking out of Chico State College (now California State University, Chico) in 1960, he hitchhiked around the world and spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica ("I needed to go somewhere where they spoke English," he says)

BILL OWENS (2)

Ferguson (above: at home in 2000) still lives in the suburbs about a mile from where he first met Owens. Owens said that in *Suburbia* he wanted to "study the sociology of who we are." He captioned the photograph below: "Before the dissolution of our marriage my husband and I owned a bar. One day a toilet broke and we brought it home."

before returning to Chico State to finish his degree in industrial arts. He then studied photography at San Francisco State College for three semesters before the *Livermore Independent News* found his name on a "seeking work" list in a local employment office.

In the 1980s, Owens gave up on photography. Or rather, he says, "photography gave up on me. You can't make a living as a photographer if you live in the suburbs." He worked at odd jobs and eventually became a brewer and distiller of some note (he pioneered California's brew-pub movement) and the author of several books on beer and spirits. "I used to make beer when I was in college," he told me one recent afternoon, after serving a glass of his own whiskey at his house in the East Bay town of Hayward. He took up picture-taking again with the advent of digital photography and after *Suburbia* was republished in 1999.

In 2000, nearly 30 years after his first portrait of Richie Ferguson, Owens made a second one of him for the *New York Times*. Ferguson, now a 43-year-old electrician, lives with his wife, Deanna, and their two children, ages 8 and 6, in Dublin, about a mile from where Owens first met him. He has graduated to a truly big wheel, a flame-painted Harley-Davidson motorcycle—a gift from Deanna. "I'd ridden dirt bikes as a kid, and when I turned 30 I guess my wife decided it was time for the real thing," he says.

Ferguson has no memory of Owens taking the now-famous portrait. "My family had an original [print of it]," he says, "but I didn't think it was a big deal. Kids don't think about those things. I guess, to me, he was just a guy taking pictures."

Now the more recent portrait hangs on gallery walls along with the original. "Bill calls me when he has an exhibition, and my wife and I always go," Ferguson says. "When people see me in the picture, they treat me like I'm famous."

Frequent contributor **OWEN EDWARDS** *is, like Bill Owens and Richie Ferguson, a resident of the San Francisco Bay Area.*

BILL OWENS (2)

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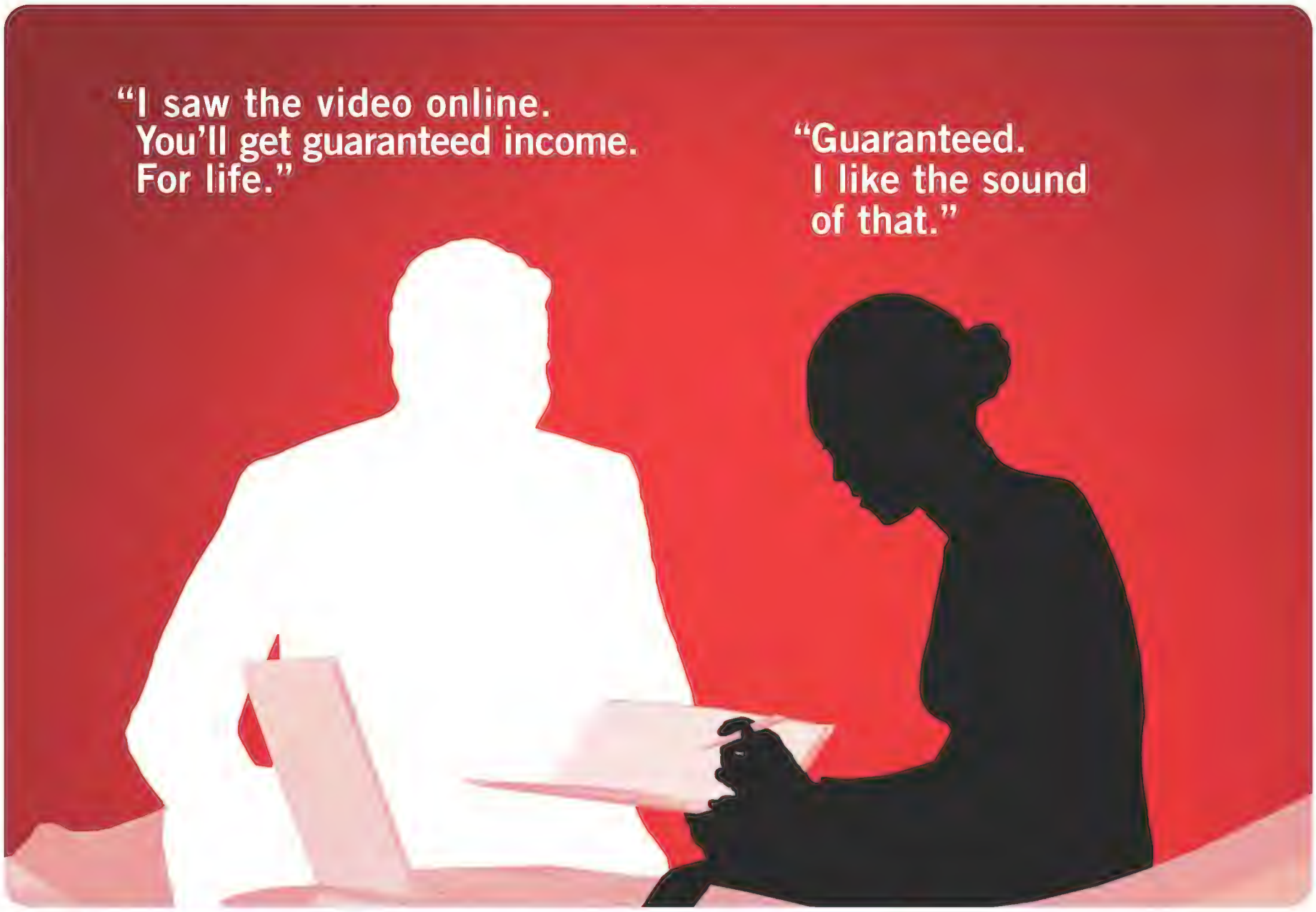

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MY KIND OF TOWN

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

"You have to be grateful in Vegas. It's the great lesson of the city, the thing I'm taking as a souvenir," says the author (above).

Winner Take All

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist rolls the dice on life in Sin City

BY J. R. MOEHRINGER PHOTOGRAPH BY JARED MCMILLEN

THE LAST BOX IS PACKED and taped shut, the moving truck will be here first thing in the morning. My footsteps echo loudly through the empty rooms.

It's 7 p.m. I'm supposed to meet friends for dinner on the Strip—one last meal before leaving Las Vegas. I'd love to cancel, but the reservation is in less than an hour.

I fall into a chair and stare at the wall. It's quiet. In two years I've never heard it this quiet. I wonder if something is wrong with Caligula.

I think back over the past two years, or try to. I can't recall specifics. Places, dates, it's all a blur. For instance, what was the name of that crazy club where we went that time? The Peppermint Hippo? The Wintergreen Dodo?

The Spearmint Rhino. Yes, that was it. Eighteen thousand square feet of semi-nude women. My friend G., visiting from the Midwest, wandered around like a Make-a-Wish kid at Disneyland. He came back to our table and reported, saucer-eyed, that he'd seen Beckham and Posh in a dark corner. We laughed at him. Poor G. He doesn't get out much. What would Beckham and Posh be doing in some crazy Vegas club? Minutes later, on my way to the men's room, I ran straight into Beckham and Posh.

I came to Vegas to work on a book. No one comes to Vegas to work on a book, but I was helping tennis great Andre Agassi write his memoir, and Agassi lives in Vegas. It seemed logical that I live here until the book was done.

I knew, going in, that I'd feel out of place. The glitz, the kitsch, the acid-trip architecture—Vegas isn't me. I'm more a Vermont guy. (I've never actually lived in Vermont, but that doesn't keep me from thinking of myself as a Vermont guy.) Writing a book, however, greatly increased my sense of alienation. Vegas doesn't want you writing any more than it wants

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you reading. You can sit by the topless pool at the Wynn all day long, all year long, and you won't see anyone crack open anything more challenging than a cold beer.

And it's not just books. Vegas discourages everything prized by book people, like silence and reason and linear thinking. Vegas is about noise, impulse, chaos. You like books? Go back to Boston.

The first time this hit me, I was driving along U.S. 95. I saw a billboard for the Library. I perked up. A library? In Vegas? Then I saw that the Library is yet another strip club; the dancers dress like wanton priestesses of the Dewey Decimal System. The librarian busting out of the billboard asked: Will you be my bookworm?

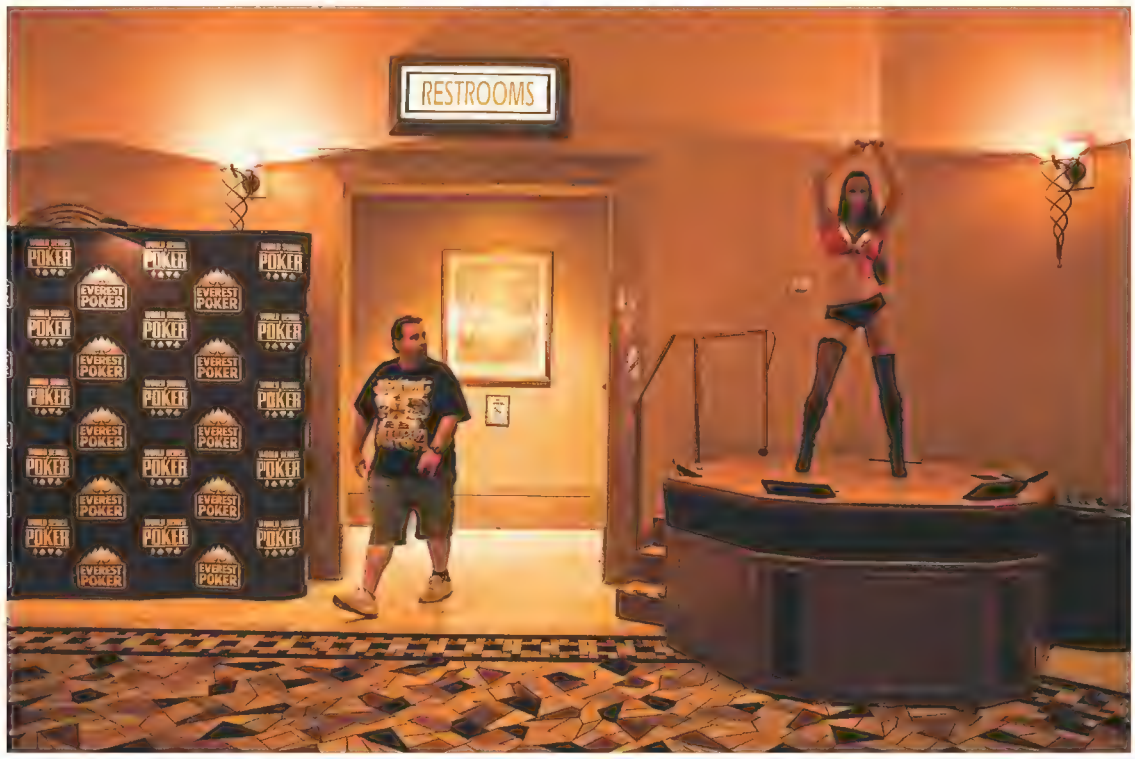
SHE ALMOST SAT in my spinach salad. I was eating in an overpriced steakhouse west of the Strip when she appeared from nowhere, resting half her derrière on my table. (The steakhouse was crowded.) She wore a miniskirt, fishnet stockings, opera gloves to her elbows. Her hair was brown, curly, jungle thick, and yet it couldn't conceal her two red horns.

She said a mega-rich couple had hired her for the night. (Beckham and Posh?) They were hitting all the hot spots, and at each spot they wanted her to appear as one of the Seven Deadly Sins. Currently the couple was cloistered in a private back room, "doing something," and she was keeping out of sight, waiting for her cue.

"What sin are you right now?"

"Sloth."

I wanted to ask if she was free after the traveling sinfest, but the couple was waving, calling her name.



The author calls Las Vegas "a Sodom and Gomorrah theme park surrounded by hideous exurban sprawl and wasteland" (above: a dancer at the Rio All-Suite Hotel).

I'd have bet the farm on Lust. I wanted to ask if she was free after the traveling sinfest, but the couple was waving, calling her name. They were ready for some Sloth.

THE AGASSI BOOK almost didn't happen, thanks to my neighbor, Caligula, and his weekly bacchanalias. The skull-thumping music from his Coliseum-size backyard, the erotic shrieks from his pool and Jacuzzi, made writing all but impossible. Caligula's guests represented a perfect cross section of Vegas: slackers, strippers, jokers, yokels, models and moguls, they arrived every Thursday night in all manner of vehicles—tricked-out Hummers, beat-up Hyundais—and partied until the shank of Monday afternoon. I learned to wear earplugs. They sell them everywhere in Vegas, even grocery stores.

IT ALWAYS COMES as a shock to the newcomer. Of the 130,000 slot machines in Vegas, many are located in grocery stores. Nothing says Vegas like swinging by Safeway at midnight for a quart of milk and seeing three grandmas feed their Social Security checks into the slots as if they were reverse ATMs. The first time this happened to me, I was reminded of my favorite "fact" about Vegas, which is wholly apocryphal: a city law prohibits the pawning of false teeth.

JUST AFTER I MOVED IN, Caligula rang my bell. He invited me over for an afternoon "cookout." I didn't yet know he was Caligula. Wanting to be neighborly, I went.

I met several statuesque young women in his backyard, in his kitchen. I thought it strange that they were so outgoing. I thought it odd that they were named after cities—Paris, Dallas, Rio. But I didn't dwell on it. Then I wandered into a room where the floor was covered with mattresses. An ultraviolet light made everyone look super tanned or vaguely satanic. Suddenly I got it. I told Caligula that I just remembered somewhere I needed to be. I shook my head at his offer of a grilled hot dog, thanked him for a lovely time and sprinted home to my books and earplugs.

As a kid I was a gypsy, as a young man I was a journalist, so I've lived everywhere. I've unpacked my bags in New York, New Haven, Boston, Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Seattle, Tucson. Each of my adopted cities has reminded me of some previous city—except Vegas, because Vegas isn't a real city. It's a Sodom and Gomorrah theme park surrounded by hideous exurban sprawl and wasteland so barren it makes the moon look like an English rose garden.

Also, every other city has a raison d'être, an answer to that basic question:

RON HAVIV / VII

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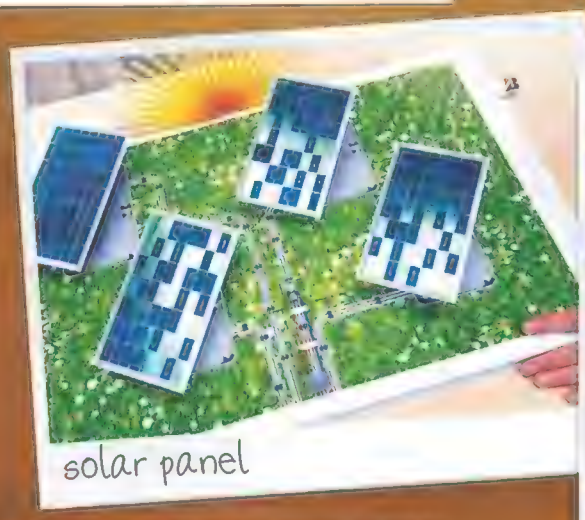

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Why did settlers settle here? Either it's close to a river, a crossroads or some other natural resource, or else it's the site of some important battle or historic event. Something.

The reason for Vegas is as follows. A bunch of white men—Mormons, miners, railroad barons, mobsters—were standing around in the middle of the desert, swatting flies and asking each other: How can we get people to come here? When they actually managed to do it, when they lured people to Vegas, their problem then became: How can we get people to stay? A far greater challenge, because transience is in the DNA of Vegas. Transient pleasures, transient money, thus transient people.

Transience is in the DNA of Vegas. Transient pleasures, transient money, thus transient people.

Las Vegas hotels and casinos flaunt "acid-trip architecture" (above: Excalibur's knights on horseback and New York-New York's Statue of Liberty and roller coaster).

More than 36 million people go through Vegas each year. Before a big heavyweight fight or convention, they fill just about every one of the city's 150,000 hotel rooms—more rooms than any other city in the United States. At checkout time, Vegas can shed the equivalent of nearly 20 percent of its population.

Though people enjoy coming to Vegas, what they really love is leaving. Every other passenger waiting to board a flight out of Vegas wears that same telltale look of fatigue, remorse, heatstroke and get-me-out-of-here-ness. I spent two months reading Dante in college, but I didn't really understand Purgatory until I spent five minutes at McCarran International Airport.

WHEN I FIRST OPENED a checking account in Vegas, my personal banker's name was Paradise. I wasn't sure I wanted to entrust all the money I had in this world to a woman named Paradise. In Vegas, she assured me, the name is not that unusual.

She spoke the truth. I met another Paradise. I also met a girl named Fabulous and a girl named Rainbow. She asked me to call her Rain for short.

One Friday afternoon, withdrawing cash for the weekend, I asked the bank teller if I could have it in fifties.

"Really?" she said. "Fifties are bad luck."

"They are?"

"Ulysses Grant is on the fifty. Grant went bankrupt. You do not want to walk around Las Vegas with a picture in your pocket of a man who went bankrupt."

Irrefutable. I asked her to give me hundreds.

As she counted out the money, I looked down at sweet, smiling Ben Franklin. I recalled that he had a weakness for fallen women. I recalled that he said, "A fool and his money are soon parted." I recalled that he discovered electricity—so Vegas could one day look like a phosphorescent candy cane. Clearly, I thought, the C-note is the proper currency for Vegas.

Hours later I lost every one of those C-notes at a roulette table. I lost them faster than you can say Ben Franklin.

VEGAS IS AMERICA. No matter what you read about Vegas, no matter where you read it, this assertion invariably pops up, as sure as a face card in the hole when the dealer's showing an ace. Vegas is unlike any other American city, and yet Vegas is America? Paradoxical, yes, but true. And it's never been more true than during these past few years. Vegas typified the American boom—best suite at the Palms: $40,000 a night—and Vegas now epitomizes the bust. If the boom was largely caused by the housing bubble, Vegas was bubbleicious. It should be no surprise, therefore, that the Vegas area leads the United States in foreclosures—five times the national rate—and ranks among the worst cities for unemployment. More than 14 percent of Las Vegans are without work, compared with the national rate of 9.5 percent.

The proof that Vegas and America are two sides of the same chip is the simple fact that America's economy functions like a casino. Who could dispute that a Vegas mind-set drives Wall Streeters? That AIG, Lehman and others put the nation's rent money on red and let the wheel spin? Credit default swaps? Derivatives? The backroom boys in Vegas must be kicking themselves that they didn't think of those things first.

THE HOUSE ALWAYS WINS. Especially if you never leave the house. Vegas has been home to some of the most notori-

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ous hermits in American history. Howard Hughes, Michael Jackson—something about Vegas attracts the agoraphobic personality. Or creates it.

As my time in Vegas wound down, I often found myself bolting the door and pulling down the window shades. My self-imposed seclusion was motivated partly by Caligula, partly by my book. Facing a tight deadline, I had no time for Vegas. Consequently I went weeks in which my only window on Vegas was the TV. Years from now my clearest memories of Sin City might be the ceaseless stream of commercials for payday loans, personal injury lawyers, bail bondsmen, chat lines and strip clubs. (My favorite was for a club called the Badda Bing, with a female announcer intoning: "I'll take care of that thing. At the Badda Bing.") From TV, I concluded that a third of Vegas is in debt, a third in jail and a third in the market for anonymous hookups.

Many of those personal injury lawyers were jumping for joy in 2008, when a local gastroenterology clinic stood accused of gross malpractice. To save money, the clinic allegedly used unsafe injection practices and inadequately cleaned equipment. Thousands of patients who went there for colonoscopies and other invasive procedures were urged to get tested immediately for hepatitis and HIV. A wave of lawsuits is pending.

With growing horror, I watched this medical scandal unfold. To my mind it symbolized the Kafkaesque quality of 21st-century Vegas, the negligence and corruption, the widespread bad luck.

Some nights on the local news a segment about the clinic would be followed by a piece about O.J. Simpson's brazen armed robbery at a local casino hotel, then one on Gov. Jim Gibbons' denial of a sexual assault allegation, or a story about Nevada's junior senator, John Ensign, cheating on his wife, though he had once declared on the floor of the United States Senate that marriage is "the cornerstone on which our society was founded." Shutting off the TV, I'd walk to the window, listen to a nude game of Marco Polo raging around Caligula's pool, and think: I have a front-row seat at the apocalypse.

Shutting off the TV, I'd walk to the window and think: I have a front-row seat at the apocalypse.

"If you tell stories for a living or collect them for fun," says Moehringer, "you can't help but feel a certain thrill at being in a place where the supply . . . is endless."

I SHAVE, GET DRESSED, drive down to the Strip. My friends, a man and a woman, a longtime couple, love Las Vegas. They can't imagine living anywhere else. Over tuna sashimi, Caprese salad, ravioli stuffed with crabmeat, they ask what I'll miss most about the town.

The food, I say.

They nod.

The energy.

Of course, of course.

What I don't say is this: I'll miss the whole seamy, seedy, icky, apocalyptic tawdriness of it all. While I was busy hating Vegas, and hiding from Vegas, a funny thing happened. I grew to love Vegas. If you tell stories for a living or collect them for fun, you can't help but feel a certain thrill at being in a place where the supply of stories—uniquely American stories—is endless.

That doesn't mean I'm staying. Vegas is like the old definition of writing: though I don't enjoy writing, I love having written. Though I didn't enjoy Vegas, I love having lived there.

I deliver an abbreviated summary of my time in Vegas to my two friends. I hit the highlights—Caligula, Sloth, the clinic that rolled the dice with people's colons.

"We went there," the man says.

"We were patients," the woman says.

"Oh no," I say. "How awful."

The question hovers.

"Negative," the man says.

"We're both fine," the woman says.

I sigh. We all smile, with relief, with gratitude.

You have to be grateful in Vegas. It's the great lesson of the city, the thing I'm taking with me as a souvenir. If you can live in Vegas, or visit Vegas, and leave in one piece, still loving it and somehow laughing about it, you should spend at least part of your last night in town doing something that will serve you well no matter where you go next: thank your lucky stars.

J. R. MOEHRINGER *wrote the best-selling memoir* The Tender Bar.

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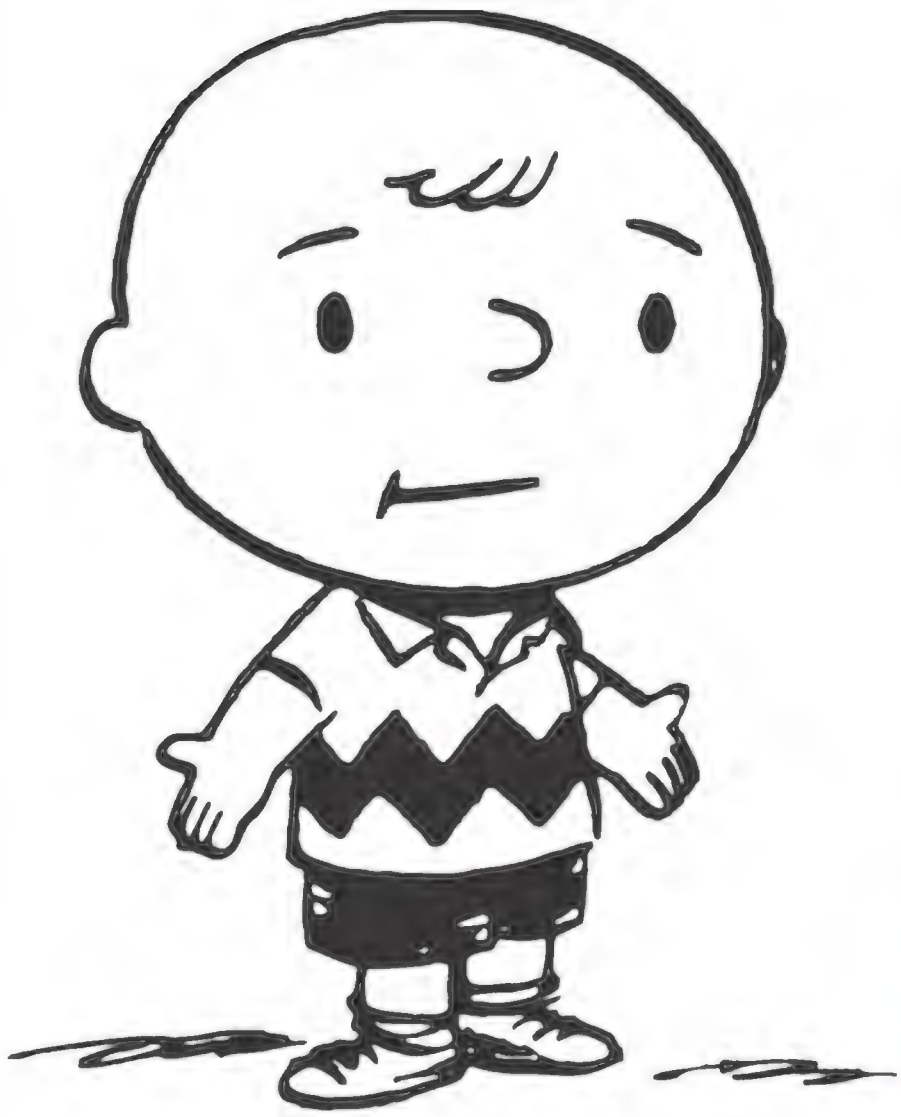
THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES
MOMENTOUS OR MERELY MEMORABLE

BY ALISON McLEAN



60 YEARS AGO
WORK FOR PEANUTS

The "Peanuts" gang debuts in seven newspapers on October 2, 1950. Charles Schulz's comic strip—an offshoot of his earlier "Li'l Folks" cartoons—stars lovable loser Charlie Brown (above in 1951). His travails with kites, footballs and his beagle Snoopy propel "Peanuts" for 17,897 strips, inspire TV specials and spawn a licensing empire before Schulz's death at age 77 in 2000.

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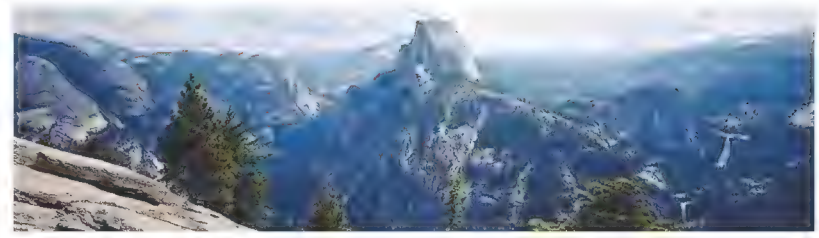
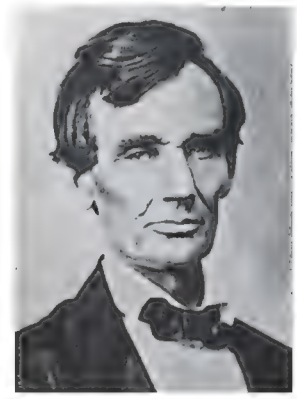
120 YEARS AGO PARK PLACE



"No temple made with hands can compare with Yosemite," John Muir writes in an 1890 campaign for federal protection of the lands around the California valley. Though the valley itself was granted to California in 1864 for public use, it is threatened, Muir argues, by nearby ranching, logging and other human endeavors. On October 1, 1890, Congress makes Yosemite the country's third national park, preserving an additional 1,500 square miles of wilderness. Today some 3.5 million visitors seek out the park's splendors each year, including Half Dome (above).

150 YEARS AGO TICKLISH SUBJECT

An 1860 campaign photograph of Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln prompts Grace Bedell, 11, of Westfield, New York, to write to him in October with a suggestion: grow a beard. Her Democrat brothers will vote for him, she says, and "all the ladies like whiskers." Lincoln replies that a beard might strike some as a "silly affectation," but months later a bearded president-elect stops in Westfield, kisses Bedell and tells the crowd he has taken her advice. An 1864 Bedell letter to Lincoln asking for a job turns up in 2007; embroiled in the Civil War, Lincoln likely did not see it. Bedell dies in 1936 at age 88.



20 YEARS AGO
TOGETHER AGAIN

Forty years of separation ends October 3, 1990, when East and West Germany reunite. Mass relocations from East to West—begun in early 1989—and the creation of a pro-reunification parliament following East Germany's first free elections in March 1990 hasten progress toward a treaty in which the five East German states join West Germany. In Berlin (above) thousands gather to mark the occasion. "It overcomes a division that never represented the will of the people," says a resident. Economic and cultural adjustments will occupy the country for the next two decades.

150 YEARS AGO BIRDS'-EYE VIEW

Suspended 1,200 feet above Boston Common in the basket of the hot-air balloon *Queen of the Air*, American photographer James Wallace Black takes the first aerial photographs in the United States, October 13, 1860. Since his glass plates require fast processing, Black follows French photographer Nadar's example and brings developing equipment up with him. Balloon photography later plays a part in Civil War reconnaissance. Today Black's *Boston as the Eagle and the Wild Goose See It* is the oldest existing aerial image.

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The Museum is open every day except December 25. Hours are 10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Star-Spangled Banner

On September 14, 1814, U.S. soldiers at Baltimore's Fort McHenry raised a huge American flag to celebrate a crucial victory over British forces during the War of 1812. The sight of those "broad stripes and bright stars" inspired Francis Scott Key to write a song that eventually became the United States national anthem.

Location: 2 Center; Flag Hall

Lincoln's Hat

At six feet four inches tall, Lincoln towered over most of his contemporaries. He chose to stand out even more by wearing high top hats.

Location: 3 Center; Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life

Dorothy's Ruby Slippers

Sixteen-year-old Judy Garland wore these sequined shoes as Dorothy Gale in the 1939 film classic *The Wizard of Oz.*

Location: 3 West; National Treasures of Popular Culture

Lunch Counter at Greensboro

On February 1, 1960, four African-American students from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical College walked into a Greensboro F.W. Woolworth and sat down at the white-only lunch counter, refusing to leave until they were served.

Location: 2 East; American Ideals

Coin, Saint-Gaudens Relief

In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt asked sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens to lead an effort to redesign American coinage. Saint-Gaudens developed a design that many consider the most beautiful American coin ever conceived. In addition to that $20 coin, Saint-Gaudens also redesigned this $10 coin, or eagle.

Location: 1 East; Stories on Money

Jacqueline Kennedy Inaugural Gown

Jacqueline Kennedy wore this off-white sleeveless gown of silk chiffon over peau d'ange to the 1961 inaugural balls. Its strapless bodice under the chiffon covering is encrusted with brilliants and embroidered with silver thread.

Location: 2 West; First Ladies at the Smithsonian

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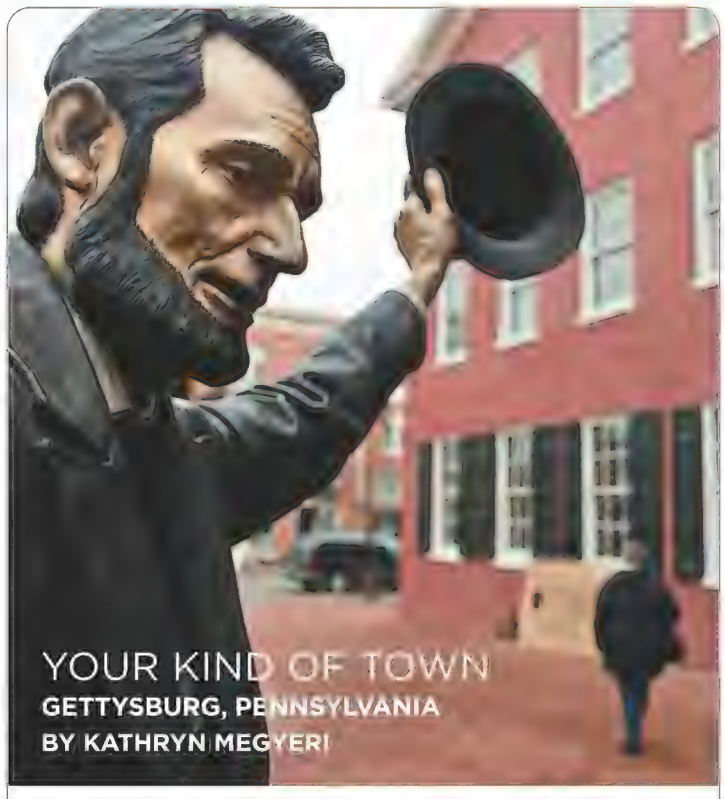

YOUR KIND OF TOWN

GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
BY KATHRYN MEGYERI

Walk through Soldiers' National Cemetery to pay homage to the thousands who died in the Battle of Gettysburg. Nearby is the only home President Eisenhower ever owned, complete with a putting green and Mamie's frilly pink bedroom. In the David Wills House, stand in the bedroom where Abraham Lincoln wrote the final draft of his Gettysburg Address.

Submit a Your Kind of Town story or photograph and find others at Smithsonian.com/yourkindoftown

SPICY SPEECH

This isn't quite an idiom, but in Bengali, a precocious child is referred to as *paka*, which means "ripe." A better expression is "to cover fish with spinach" (actually, the generic term for leafy greens), which means to attempt to quell a rumor.

—**Sadia Rodriguez**, of Georgetown, Texas, on the Food and Think blog's "Deciphering the Food Idioms of Foreign Languages," Smithsonian.com/idioms

PIONEER PAINTERS

"These women ventured on their own or alongside male relatives into the wilderness, painting the glorious scenery that inspired America's first art movement (*Kaaterskill Clove*, Harriet Cany Peale, 1858). As the Thomas Cole National Historic Site show demonstrates, they made works that are just as awe-inspiring as those of their male counterparts."

—**Judith Dobrzynski,** "The Grand Women Artists of the Hudson River School," Smithsonian.com/hudson

PHOTO CONTEST

EDITORS' PICK

"I was on the horse I rented, near Bromo Mountain. It was around 8 in the morning. I followed them until I got what I wanted."

—**Mochammad Nara Pratama**, of Bandung, Indonesia, on his photograph in East Java, Indonesia

Enter your photograph at Smithsonian.com/photocontest

CAROLYN KASTER / AP IMAGES; YURI ARCURS / DREAMSTIME.COM; HARRIET CANY PEALE (1800-1869), *KAATERSKILL CLOVE* (1858), PRIVATE COLLECTION; MOCHAMMAD NARA PRATAMA

Around the Mall

SCENES AND SIGHTINGS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUMS AND BEYOND

ANN JOHANSSON

From the Castle p. 28
The Object at Hand p. 32
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UNSUNG HEROES

A NEW EXHIBITION AT THE AMERICAN INDIAN MUSEUM COMMEMORATES PERFORMERS WHO HELPED SHAPE MODERN MUSIC

PAGE 30

No matter what type of music they played, says Apache guitarist Stevie Salas (this page), Native Americans "seemed to share a common rhythmic thread."

Show and Tell

BY G. WAYNE CLOUGH

STEVEN SPIELBERG HAS an impressive art collection, but one painting always attracted his children's friends. "Nobody was stopped by the Monet, but [Norman Rockwell's *Happy Birthday Miss Jones*] arrests everyone's attention," he says. The painting depicts a classroom; pupils are sitting properly at their desks—except for one boy with an eraser on his head. He's probably the one who wrote "Happy Birthday Jonesy" on the blackboard just before Miss Jones arrived. Both Spielberg and his fellow filmmaker George Lucas admire Rockwell's ability to frame a story in a single painting; Lucas owns the preliminary sketch of *Happy Birthday Miss Jones*. The public can see the painting and drawing together, along with 55 other Rockwell works, in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's exhibition "Telling Stories: Norman Rockwell from the Collections of George Lucas and Steven Spielberg," on view through January 2, 2011. The show examines parallel themes in Rockwell's paintings and Lucas' and Spielberg's films, such as love of family and country, children growing up, Hollywood glamour and ordinary heroes. The exhibition and its catalog break new ground in probing Rockwell's fascination with the movies.

"Happy Birthday Miss Jones" arrests everyone's attention, says collector Spielberg.

"If I hadn't become a painter," said Rockwell, "I would have liked to have been a movie director." He deliberately used cinematic devices such as staging, directing his models, selecting costumes and props, and hinting at prior actions. In *Miss Jones*, chalk smashed on the floor tips us off to how hurriedly the kids wrote their birthday greetings. Lucas explains that filmmakers often strive to convey a lot of information quickly. "Rockwell was a master at that . . . at telling a story in one frame," he says. And at conveying emotion; in her smile we grasp Miss Jones' appreciation for her pupils' affection.

The *Saturday Evening Post* was in my home while I was growing up—just as it was in both Spielberg's and Lucas' homes. Rockwell's cover illustrations (323 in over 50 years) spoke to simpler times. He captured our hopes and insecurities. Would we measure up and be able to leave home for the wider world? That question is also unforgettably addressed in the 1973 Lucas film *American Graffiti*. Other films by Lucas and Spielberg, such as *Star Wars*, the Indiana Jones series and *Saving Private Ryan*, reflect our country's values and culture. Thanks to Lucas and Spielberg, millions of visitors—in person and online (americanart.si.edu)—will enjoy Norman Rockwell in new ways. We are proud to host this storytelling bonanza.

G. WAYNE CLOUGH *is Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.*

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Up Where They Belong

From country music ballads to hard-hitting rock power chords, Native Americans left a lasting impression on the soundtrack of the 20th century

"I LOOK AT YOU ALL, see the love there that's sleeping, while my guitar gently weeps," George Harrison sang to a packed audience at the 1971 Concert for Bangladesh in Madison Square Garden. A stoic Eric Clapton trailed with a wailing guitar lick. Leon Russell pounded the keys in the background.

A fourth figure appears in the video at the National Museum of the American Indian: supporting guitarist Jesse Ed Davis. Though he is the least-known musician onstage, with his muscular build he seems to tower over the rest.

"If Clapton was known as God, then Jesse Ed Davis was right up there with the disciples somewhere," says musician and contributing curator Stevie Salas, 47, who is posing for photographs at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the museum's new exhibition, "Up Where We Belong: Native Musicians in Popular Culture."

With his mane of curly black hair, aviator sunglasses, green electric guitar and bright purple sneakers, Salas (Apache), who began his own career playing guitar with funk maestro George Clinton, embodies more of a rocker aesthetic than his fellow Native musician Jesse Ed Davis ever did. Yet Davis, who died in 1988, was the on-call supporting guitarist for some of the biggest names in American music, including Jackson Browne, Albert King, Willie Nelson and British imports such as Clapton and Rod Stewart.

Cree singer Buffy Sainte-Marie won a 1983 Academy Award for best original song; Johnny Cash recorded *Bitter Tears*, a 1964 album of Native American protest ballads.

Like Davis, many of the musicians featured in the exhibit had an impact on 20th-century music that far exceeded their fame. For instance, Shawnee guitarist Link Wray, who composed the 1958 instrumental song "Rumble," invented the reverberating power chord—which later became the signature sound for such bands as Led Zeppelin and The Who.

While some musicians—including Jimi Hendrix and Rita Coolidge—reached stardom without publicizing their indigenous roots, others found inspiration in their heritage. Peter La Farge, a 1950s and '60s folk singer and descendant of Narragansett Indians, composed songs protesting the contemporary struggles of Native Americans. Johnny Cash—who had already achieved stardom with his number one country music hit "Ring of Fire"—developed an interest in Native American issues and recorded La Farge's songs in a 1964 album *Bitter Tears*. When radio stations refused to play it on grounds that it was too political, an outraged Cash (who was not Native American) took out an ad in *Billboard* declaring, "Where are your guts?"

Buffy Sainte-Marie's "Up Where We Belong"—the exhibition's title—won a 1983 Academy Award for best original song, from the movie *An Officer and a Gentleman*. Born on a Cree reservation in Canada, Sainte-Marie helped start a foundation for Native American education. Her repertoire also includes protest songs such as "Now That the Buffalo's Gone" and "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

In addition to gazing at photographs, videos and pop culture artifacts (such as Jimi Hendrix's iconic patchwork coat), museumgoers can listen to a soundtrack featuring the works of exhibition musicians. Amid the diverse sounds of rock, pop, country, soul, heavy metal and funk, Salas detects a common element: "Every one of those musicians had a real sense of rhythm," he says. "They seemed to share a common rhythmic thread that worked and blended with all kinds of music, from pop, rock, R&B and country."

Indeed, Salas' success as a musician has a lot to do with his versatility. "You could ask: What do Justin Timberlake, Rod Stewart, George Clinton and Mick Jagger have in common?" he says. "And you'd say Stevie Salas. They have an Apache Indian in common."

Yet, Salas adds, "I was never the guy up there with my eagle feather tied to my guitar neck. That's for me and my family. That's for when I come home. When I'm out there onstage, I think of myself as a global world artist, a citizen of the whole planet."

And he says he hopes the exhibit will convey to a younger generation of Native musicians that global success is possible. "I've had kids tell me, 'I want to do what you're doing, but they won't let us.' And I say to them, 'Well who are *they*? Because *they* let me.'"

JESS RIGHTHAND

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Read our interview with Buffy Sainte-Marie at Smithsonian.com/sainte-marie

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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN, HEYE CENTER, NEW YORK CITY • **WOVEN GARTERS**

Cloaked in Defiance

Even in captivity, the Seminole warrior Osceola wore his unbroken spirit on his sleeve

BY OWEN EDWARDS

"INFINITY OF NATIONS," a new permanent exhibition encompassing nearly 700 works of indigenous art from North, Central and South America, opens October 23 at the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City, part of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). The objects include a pair of woven, beaded garters worn by Billy Powell of the Florida Seminole tribe.

Billy Powell is hardly a household name. But his Seminole designation—Osceola—resonates in the annals of Native American history and the nation's folklore. Celebrated by writers, studied by scholars, he was a charismatic war leader who staunchly resisted the uprooting of the Seminoles by the U.S. government; the garters testify to his sartorial style.

Born in Tallassee, Alabama, in 1804, Powell (hereafter Osceola) was of mixed blood. His father is thought to have been an English trader named William Powell, though historian Patricia R. Wickman, author of *Osceola's Legacy*, believes he may have been a Creek Indian who died soon after Osceola was born. His mother was part Muscogee and part Caucasian. At some point, likely around 1814, when he and his mother moved to Florida to live among Creeks and Seminoles, Osceola began to insist he was a pure-blood Indian.

"He identified himself as an Indian," says Cécile Ganteaume, an NMAI curator and organizer of the "Infinity of Nations" exhibition.

A 19th-century lithograph depicting Osceola—based on a portrait painted from life by artist George Catlin in 1838—records the warrior's elaborate wardrobe, including a feathered hat, embroidered sash and—hanging around his neck—three crescent-shaped ceremonial metal gorgets, reminiscent of European knightly armor. The Seminole regarded Osceola, Catlin recalled, "as the master spirit and leader of the tribe." His influence, the artist added, extended "to the remotest parts of the United States, and amongst the Indian tribes, to the Rocky Mountains."

In 1838, the capture of Osceola (above: a 19th-century portrait) attracted national attention: "He was recognized as a defender of his people," says curator Cécile Ganteaume.

"He was a bit flamboyant," says historian Donald L. Fixico of Arizona State University, who is working on a book about Osceola. "Someone in his situation—a man of mixed blood living among pure-blood Seminoles—would have to try hard to prove himself as a leader and a warrior. He wanted to draw attention to himself by dressing in a finer way."

"The Creeks started wearing European-style clothing in the 18th century," notes Ganteaume, "and modified it in their own ways." The garters in the exhibition were decorative, not functional; in the lithograph, they are visible tied just beneath Osceola's knees, worn over button-fastened leggings.

Fixico, himself a Seminole, notes that "when you sit for a portrait, you wear your Sunday best." Though Osceola had been imprisoned by the U.S. Army and suffered from malaria when he posed for Catlin, he retains the proud bearing of a leader aware of posterity. "When his illness

WALTER LARRIMORE; SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM / ART RESOURCE, NY

was at its peak," Susan Orlean wrote in *The Orchid Thief*, "Osceola roused himself from his sickbed and dressed himself in his favorite outfit of large silver earrings, a feathered turban, red war paint, ostrich plumes, silver spurs, a decorated powder horn, a fancy bullet pouch, a striped blanket, and a whalebone cane. As soon as he finished dressing, he died."

Osceola had risen to prominence as a Seminole leader when he refused to accept the Indian Removal Act—legislation proposed by President Andrew Jackson in 1830. Passed after strenuous debate in Congress (Representative David Crockett of Tennessee opposed it), the act mandated exchange of tribal lands in the South for territory west of the Mississippi River. Some Cherokee, Choctaw and Seminole chiefs went along, but Osceola and other Seminoles refused to sign the Treaty of Fort Gibson, which would have ceded their Florida homeland. In December 1835, during what became known as the Second Seminole War (1835-42), Osceola and a band of followers ambushed and killed a government agent, Wiley Thompson, and several others.

After the slayings, Osceola became a wanted man. Army troops arrested him in October 1837, while under a flag of truce. He was imprisoned, first at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, and later at Fort Moultrie, near Charleston, South Carolina.

Osceola's capture drew national attention. "He was recognized as a defender of his people," Ganteaume says, "and coverage in the American press made him well known." His fame only grew after his death at Fort Moultrie three months after his arrest. Today, his renown lives on in various place names, including Osceola counties in several states and the Osceola National Forest in Florida. The legendary warrior is also the symbol of Florida State University in Tallahassee. "Osceola served as a cultural bridge between the non-Indian world and the Seminoles," says Fixico.

OWEN EDWARDS *is a freelance writer and author of the book* Elegant Solutions.

MELISSA FARLOW

Q&A

KIRK SAVAGE is the author of *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*. For it, he was awarded the 2010 Charles C. Eldredge Prize for Distinguished Scholarship in American Art by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. He spoke with the magazine's Megan Gambino.

How has America's perception of the National Mall changed over the years?
In the 19th century, it was [just] a sequence of grounds attached to various buildings and institutions. The local residents saw it as a sort of Central Park for Washington, D.C. In the mid-20th century, its purpose changed radically. The Mall became the monumental core of the nation.

Americans were initially opposed to the idea of national monuments. Why?
After the Revolution, grandiose monuments were associated with the monarchy and the British aristocracy. There was also a lot of skepticism about what monuments could actually accomplish: Why should we spend $100,000 on a pile of stones? What is it really going to accomplish? Early Americans felt that real collective memory could only exist within the citizenry itself.

You've written that war monuments changed from statues of heroes on horseback to open structures, like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. What explains this shift?
The obsession with great commanders and individual heroes was the prevalent mind-set in the late 18th to mid-19th centuries. But that later changed to focus on the common soldiers. That's why, unlike the Civil War monuments, there are no grandiose statues of military commanders from World War II, the Korean War or the Vietnam War. We might call this the democratization of the public monument. It's a shift from the great man idea of history to one that encompasses the ordinary man.

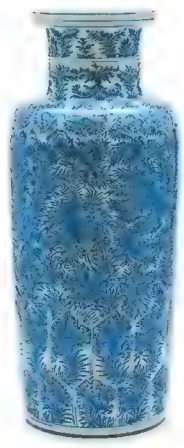
Can you describe an instance when you really felt the power of a particular National Mall monument?
I remember one day at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. I came at an early hour so I could be there by myself. A man in a business suit walked up to the monument. He put his briefcase down, and he straightened up. He was looking at a particular spot—a particular name. And he saluted this spot on the monument, then picked up his briefcase and went off to work.

Read more of our interview with Kirk Savage at Smithsonian.com/savage

What's Up

HAIL TO THE KING

In 1956, Alfred Wertheimer followed and photographed a little-known, 21-year-old Elvis Presley on the road (left: *Going Home*, 1956). See 56 of these images at the Portrait Gallery, beginning October 23.



CHINA MANIA

Blue-and-white Chinese porcelain was all the rage in 1870s London. The Freer Gallery displays 23 pieces of porcelain and related artwork through August 7, 2011 (left: mid-17th-century vase with cobalt pigment).

PERSONAL TROVES

Opening October 15 at American History, the personal collection of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey chronicles some 400 years of the African-American experience (right: *Well-to-do Black Couple*, c. 1860).

MCFLOOD

A life-size replica of a fast-food restaurant slowly fills with water—courtesy of the Danish art collective Superflex. View its 21-minute film (left: *Flooded McDonald's*) through November 28, 2010, at the Hirshhorn.

AMERICAN SPLENDOR

This *Maya Warrior Figure* (right: Mexico, c. A.D. 700) is one of more than 700 works of Native American art—representing indigenous nations from across North, Central and South America—in a new permanent exhibition opening at New York City's George Gustav Heye Center on October 23.

BY JESS RIGHTHAND

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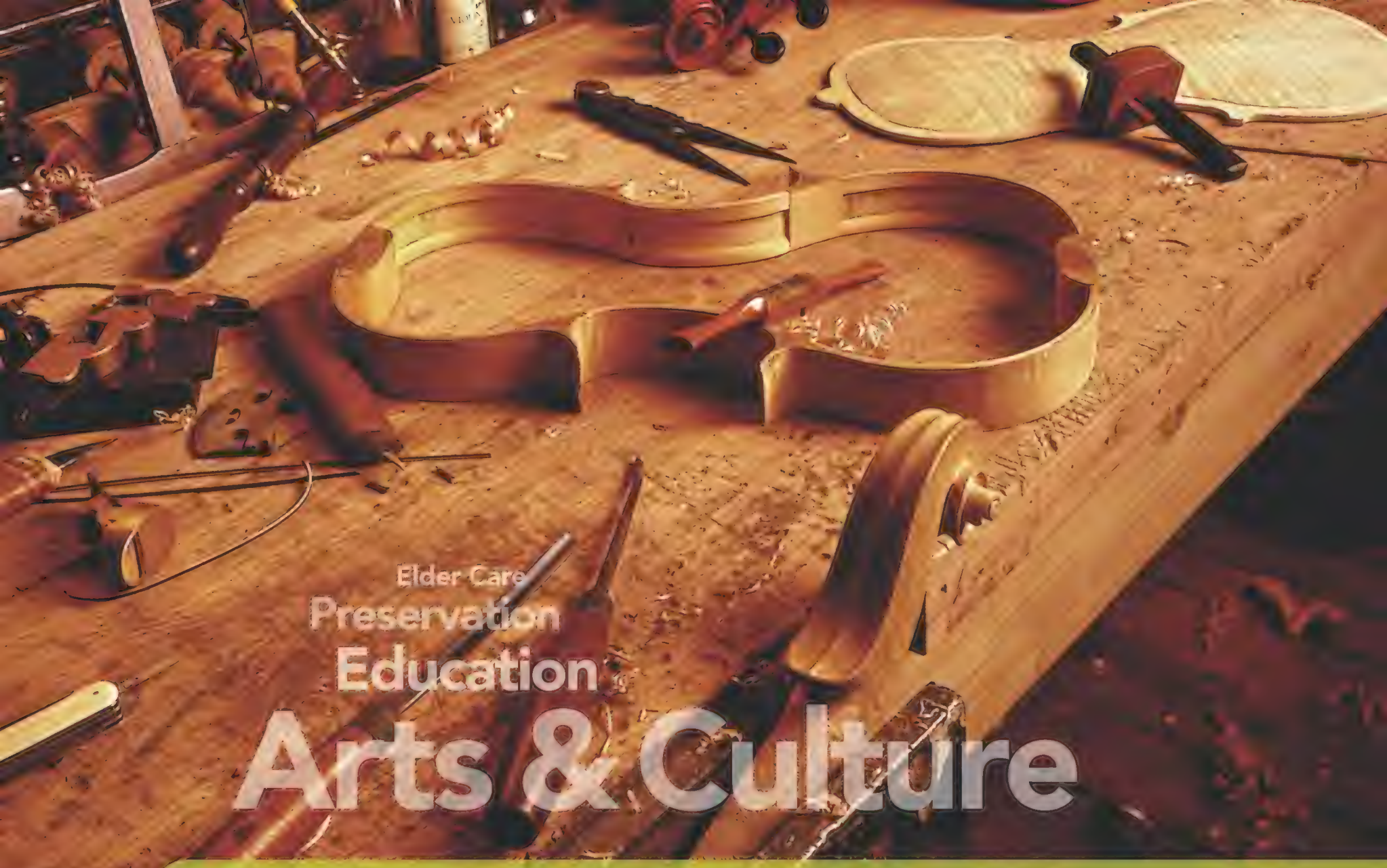

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On the anniversary of the assassination of an anti-Mafia magistrate, Palermo's citizens joined politicians in a *fiaccolata* (candlelight vigil) in his honor.

DEFYING THE GODFATHER

Across Sicily, ordinary citizens are standing up to the Mafia and weakening its grip on society

BY JOSHUA HAMMER PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANCESCO LASTRUCCI

UNTIL RECENTLY, ERNESTO BISANTI could not have imagined he would face down the Cosa Nostra (Our Thing)—the Sicilian Mafia. In 1986 Bisanti started a furniture factory in Palermo. Soon after, a man he recognized as one of the neighborhood's Mafiosi visited him. The man demanded the equivalent of about $6,000 a year, Bisanti told me, " 'to keep things quiet. It will be cheaper for you than hiring a security guard.' Then he added, 'I don't want to see you every month, so I will come every June and December, and you will give me $3,000 each time.' " Bisanti accepted the deal—as had nearly all the shop and business owners in the city.

The arrangement lasted for two decades. "Sometimes he showed up with a son in tow," Bisanti recalled, "and he would say, 'Please tell my son that he has to study, because it's important.' It became like a relationship." A stocky man with gray hair, Bisanti, 64, told me the money wasn't that burdensome. "In their system, it's not important how much you pay. It's important *that* you pay," he said. "It's a form of submission."

Then, in November 2007, police arrested Salvatore Lo Piccolo, the head of Palermo's Mafia. A notebook found in Lo Piccolo's possession contained a list of hundreds of shop and business owners who paid the *pizzo*—an ancient word of Sicilian origin meaning protection money. Bisanti's name was on the list. The Palermo police asked him if he would testify against the extortionist. Not long ago, such a public denunciation would have meant a death sentence, but in recent years police raids and betrayals by informers have weakened the

Mafia here, and a new citizens group called Addiopizzo (Goodbye Pizzo) has organized resistance to the protection rackets. Bisanti said yes, took the witness stand in a Palermo courtroom in January 2008 and helped send the extortionist to prison for eight years. The Mafia hasn't bothered Bisanti since. "They know that I will denounce them again, so they are fearful," he said.

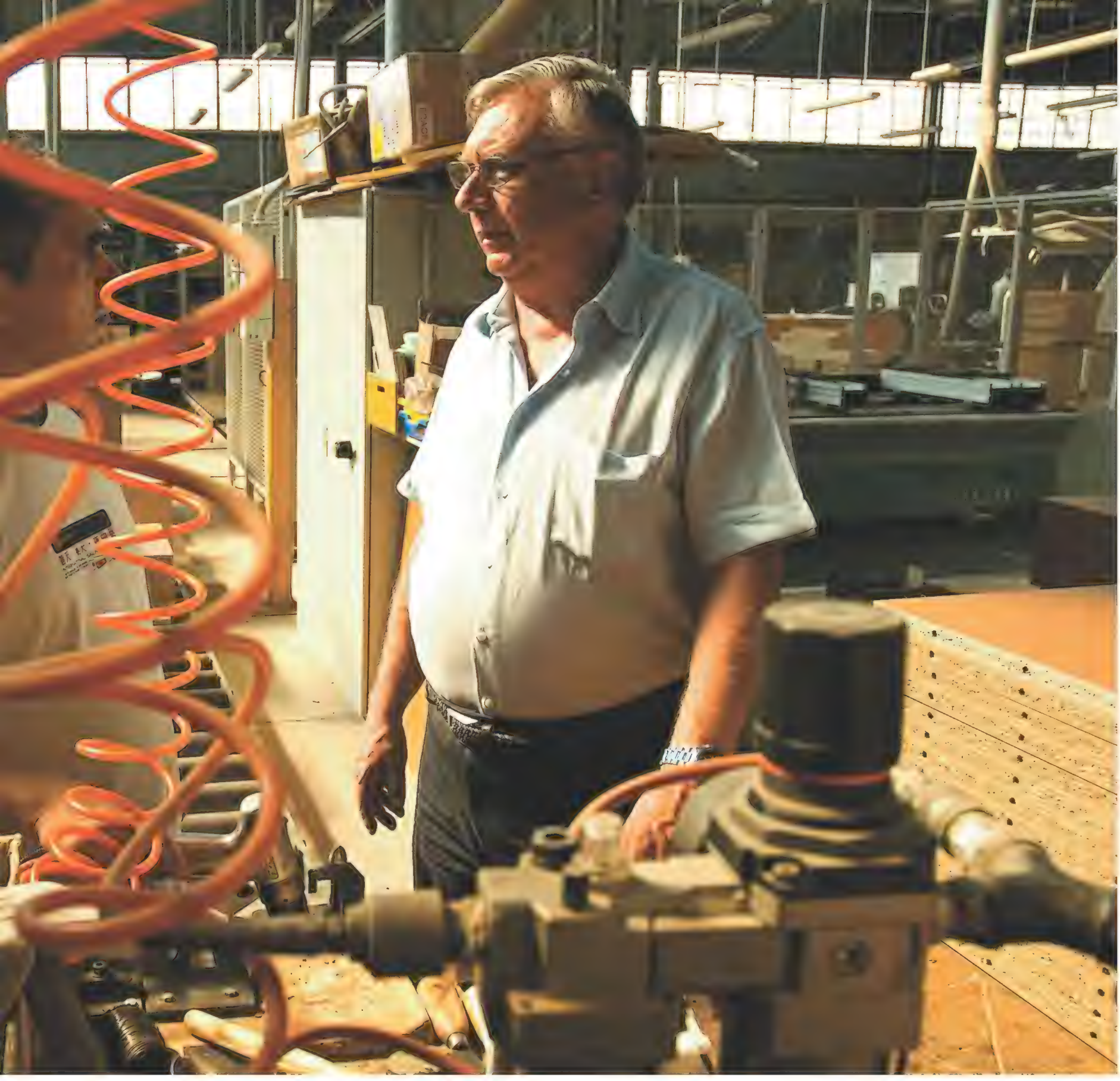
THIS SUN-DRENCHED ISLAND at the foot of the Italian peninsula has always been a place of conflicting identities. There is the romantic Sicily, celebrated for its fragrant citrus groves, stark granite mountains and glorious ruins left by a succession of conquerors. The vast acropolis of Selinunte, built around 630 B.C., and the Valley of the Temples at Agrigento—described by the Greek poet Pindar as "the most beautiful city of the mortals"—are considered among the finest vestiges of classical Greece, which ruled Sicily from the eighth to the third centuries B.C.

In the ninth century A.D., Arab conquerors built frescoed palaces in Palermo and Catania; few churches are more magnificent than Palermo's Palantine Chapel, erected from 1130 to 1140 by Sicily's King Roger II during a period of Norman domination. Natural splendors abound as well: at the eastern end of the island rises Mount Etna, an 11,000-foot-high active volcano, beneath which, according to Greek mythology, lies the serpentine monster Typhon, trapped and entombed for eternity by Zeus.

But Sicily is also known as the birthplace of the Mafia, arguably the most powerful and organized crime syndicate

Three years ago Palermo furniture maker Ernesto Bisanti (above right) helped send a Mafia extortionist to prison. He says he doesn't worry about recriminations from the Cosa Nostra: "They know that I will denounce them again, so they are fearful." Below from left: Paolo Borsellino and Giovanni Falcone were both killed—Falcone by a car bomb—in 1992 for prosecuting the Mafia. Salvatore Riina (in a Bologna courtroom in 1996) was captured in 1993, convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

MAP: GUILBERT GATES; BOTTOM: SYGMA / CORBIS; AP IMAGES; ALBERTO PIZZOLI / SYGMA / CORBIS; GIANNI SCHICCHI / AP IMAGES



"IN THEIR SYSTEM, IT'S NOT IMPORTANT HOW MUCH YOU PAY. IT'S IMPORTANT *THAT* YOU PAY," HE SAID. "IT'S A FORM OF SUBMISSION."

in the world. The term, which may derive from the adjective *mafiusu*—roughly "swaggering" or "bold"—gained currency in the 1860s, around the time of Giuseppe Garibaldi's unification of Italy. It refers to the organized crime entrenched in Sicily's then-isolated, largely rural society. When Allied forces invaded Sicily during World War II, they sought help from Italian-American mobsters with Sicilian ties, such as Vito Genovese, to secure control of the island. The Allies even allowed Mafia figures to become mayors there. Over the next few decades, the Cosa Nostra built relationships with Italian politicians—including Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti (who served seven terms between 1972 and 1992)—and raked in billions through heroin trafficking, extortion, rigged construction contracts and other illegal enterprises. Those who dared speak out were usually silenced with a car bomb or a hail of bullets. Some of the most violent and consequential Mafia figures came from Corleone, the mountain town south of Palermo and the name novelist Mario Puzo conferred on the American Mafia family central to his 1969 novel, *The Godfather*.

Then, in the 1980s, two courageous prosecutors (known in Italy as investigating magistrates), Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, using wiretapping and other means, persuaded several high-ranking mobsters to break the oath of silence, or *omerta*. Their efforts culminated in the "maxi-trial" of 1986-87, which exposed hidden links between mob-

sters and government officials, and sent more than 300 Cosa Nostra figures to prison. The Mafia struck back. On May 23, 1992, along the Palermo airport highway, hit men blew up an armored limousine carrying Falcone, 53, and his magistrate-wife Francesca Morvillo, 46, killing them and three police escorts. Borsellino, 52, was killed by another bomb, along with his five bodyguards, as he walked to his mother's Palermo doorway less than two months later.

But rather than crippling the anti-Mafia movement, the assassinations—as well as subsequent Mafia car bombings in Milan, Florence and Rome that killed a dozen people—galvanized the opposition. In January 1993, Salvatore ("The Beast") Riina, the Cosa Nostra's *capo di tutti i capi*, or boss of all bosses, from Corleone, who had masterminded the assassinations, was captured near his Palermo villa after two decades on the run. He was tried and sentenced to 12 consecutive life terms. Riina was succeeded by Bernardo ("The Tractor") Provenzano, who shifted to a low-key approach, eliminating most violence while continuing to rake in cash through protection rackets and the procurement of public building contracts. In April 2006, police finally tracked down Provenzano and arrested him in a crude cottage in the hills above Corleone; he had been a fugitive for 43 years. Provenzano went to prison to serve several consecutive life sentences. His likely successor, Matteo Messina Denaro, has also been on the run since 1993.

Even before Provenzano's arrest, a quiet revolution had begun to take hold in Sicilian society. Hundreds of businesspeople and shopkeepers in Palermo and other Sicilian towns and cities began refusing to pay the pizzo. Mayors, journalists and other public figures who once looked the other way started speaking out against the Mafia's activities. A law passed by the Italian parliament in 1996 allowed the government to confiscate the possessions of convicted Mafia figures and turn them over, gratis, to socially responsible organizations. In the past few years, agricultural cooperatives and other groups have taken over mobsters' villas and fields, converting them into community centers, inns and organic farms. "We've helped local people change their views about the Mafia," says Francesco Galante, communications director of Libera Terra, an umbrella organization led by an Italian priest that today controls nearly 2,000 acres of confiscated farmland, mainly around Corleone. The group has created jobs for 100 local workers, some of whom once depended on the Cosa Nostra; replanted long-abandoned fields with grapes, tomatoes, chickpeas and other crops; and sells its own brands of wine, olive oil and pasta throughout Italy. "The locals don't see the Mafia anymore as the only institution they can trust," Galante says.

AFTER I LANDED AT PALERMO'S Falcone-Borsellino Airport this past March—renamed in 1995 in honor of the murdered magistrates—I rented a car and followed the Mediterranean seacoast toward Palermo, passing Capaci, where Falcone and his wife had met their deaths. (A Mafia hit team disguised as a construction crew had buried half a ton of plastic explosives inside a drain pipe on the airport highway and detonated it as Falcone's vehicle crossed over.) After turning off the highway, I drove past row after row of shoddily constructed concrete apartment blocks on Palermo's outskirts, an urban eyesore built by Mafia-controlled companies in the 1960s and '70s. "This is Ciancimino's legacy," my translator, Andrea Cottone, told me as we drove down Via della Libertà, a once-elegant avenue where the tenements have crowded out a few surviving 18th- and 19th-century villas. Billions of dollars in contracts were doled out to the Cosa Nostra by the city's corrupt assessor for public works, Vito Ciancimino; he died under house arrest in Rome in 2002 after being convicted of aiding the Mafia.

Passing a gantlet of bodyguards inside Palermo's modern Palace of Justice, I entered the second-floor office of Ignazio De Francisci. The 58-year-old magistrate served as Falcone's deputy between 1985 and 1989, before Falcone became a top

Even before the 2006 arrest of Bernardo ("The Tractor") Provenzano (below left), a 43-year fugitive, Sicily's shopkeepers and businesspeople had begun refusing to pay protection money. Provenzano's arrest was followed the next year by that of Salvatore Lo Piccolo (center), Palermo's top boss. Police arrested Giuseppe Liga (right) this year. Liga, an architect, exemplifies the new breed of Mafia leaders: less violent white-collar professionals who lack their predecessors' street smarts.

MARCELLO PATERNOSTRO / REUTERS; AP IMAGES; FRANCO LANNINO / EPA / CORBIS

Magistrate Ignazio De Francisci (right) keeps a photograph of Borsellino and Falcone on his office wall. "I often think of him," he says of Falcone, his immediate superior in the 1980s, "and wish that he were still at my shoulder."

assistant to Italy's minister of justice in Rome. "Falcone was like Christopher Columbus. He was the one who opened the way for everyone else," De Francisci told me. "He broke new ground. The effect he had was tremendous." Falcone had energized the prosecution force and put in place a witness-protection program that encouraged many Mafiosi to become *pentiti*, or collaborators, with the justice system. Gazing at a photograph of the murdered magistrate on the wall behind his desk, he turned silent. "I often think about him, and wish that he were still at my shoulder," De Francisci finally said.

Eighteen years after Falcone's assassination, the pressure on the Mafia hasn't let up: De Francisci had just presided over a months-long investigation that led to the arrests of 26 top Mafiosi in Palermo and several U.S. cities, on charges from drug trafficking to money laundering. The day before, police had captured Giuseppe Liga, 60, an architect and allegedly one of the most powerful figures in Palermo's Mafia. Liga's ascent illustrates the Mob's transformation: power has shifted from coldblooded killers such as Riina and Provenzano to financial types and professionals who lack both the street smarts—and appetite for violence—of their predecessors. De Francisci described the Addiopizzo movement as the most inspiring symbol of the new fearlessness among the population. "It is a revolutionary development," he said.

"FALCONE WAS LIKE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. HE WAS THE ONE WHO OPENED THE WAY FOR EVERYONE ELSE," DE FRANCISCI TOLD ME.

At dusk, I ventured out to Viale Strasburgo, a busy commercial thoroughfare where Addiopizzo had organized a recruitment drive. A dozen young men and women had gathered inside a tent festooned with banners proclaiming, in Italian, "We Can Do It!" Addiopizzo began in 2004, when six friends who wanted to open a pub—and who sensed the Mafia's weakness—put up posters across the city that accused Sicilians of surrendering their dignity to the criminal organization. "People said, 'What is this?' For a Sicilian [the accusation] was the ultimate insult," Enrico Colajanni, one of the first members told me. The movement now lists 461 members; in 2007, an offshoot, Libero Futuro, was formed; its 100 or so members have testified against extortionists in 27 separate trials. "It's a good start," Colajanni said, "but thousands are still paying in Palermo; we need a long time to develop a mass movement."

According to a University of Palermo study published in 2008, around 80 percent of Palermo businesses still pay the pizzo, and the protection racket in Sicily brings the Mafia at least a billion euros annually (more than $1.26 billion at today's

Writer **JOSHUA HAMMER**, *who is a frequent* SMITHSONIAN *contributor, lives in Berlin. Photographer* **FRANCESCO LASTRUCCI** *is based in Italy, New York and Hong Kong.*

exchange rate). A handful of attacks on pizzo resisters continues to frighten the population: in 2007, Rodolfo Guajana, an Addiopizzo member who owns a multimillion-dollar hardware business, received a bottle half-filled with gasoline and containing a submerged lighter. He paid it no mind; four months later, his warehouse was burned to the ground. For the most part, however, "the Mafia ignores us," Addiopizzo volunteer Carlo Tomaselli told me. "We are like small fish to them."

ONE MORNING, MY TRANSLATOR, Andrea, and I drove with Francesco Galante through the Jato Valley, south of Palermo, to get a look at Libera Terra's newest project. We parked our car on a country road and hiked along a muddy trail through the hills, a chill wind in our faces. Below, checkerboard fields of wheat and chickpeas extended toward jagged, bald-faced peaks. In the distance I could see the village of San Cipirello, its orange-tile-roofed houses clustered around a soaring cathedral. Soon we came to rows of grape vines tied around wooden posts, tended by four men wearing blue vests bearing Libera Terra logos. "Years ago, this was a vineyard owned by the Brusca crime family, but it had fallen into disrepair," Galante told me. A cooperative affiliated with Libera Terra acquired the seized land from a consortium of municipalities in 2007, but struggled to find willing workers. "It was a taboo to put foot on this land—the land of the Boss. But the first ones were hired, and slowly they started to come." Galante expects the fields to produce 42 tons of grapes in its first harvest, enough for 30,000 bottles of red

"We are a little fire that we hope will become a big fire," says Pino Maniaci (right), owner of Telejato, a tiny anti-Mafia TV station. Enrico Colajanni (below: in red T-shirt talking to fellow businessmen) was one of six friends who in 2004 put up posters accusing their countrymen of bowing to the Cosa Nostra. "We've helped local people change their views about the Mafia," says Francesco Galante (below right: in brown), communications director of an organization that controls nearly 2,000 acres of land confiscated from the Mafia.

AFTER THE BEATING, HE DECLINED AN OFFER OF POLICE PROTECTION, SAYING IT WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO MEET HIS "SECRET SOURCES."

wine for sale under the Centopassi label—a reference to a movie about a slain anti-Mafia activist. I walked through neat rows of vines, still awaiting the first fruit of the season, and spoke to one of the workers, Franco Sottile, 52, who comes from nearby Corleone. He told me that he was now earning 50 percent more than he did when he worked on land owned by Mafia bosses, and for the first time, enjoyed a measure of job security. "At the beginning, I thought there might be problems [working here]," he told me. "But now we understand that there is nothing to fear."

I had heard that the Mafia was less forgiving in Partinico, a gritty town of 30,000 people 20 miles to the northwest. I drove there and parked in front of the main piazza, where old men wearing black berets and threadbare suits sat in the sun on benches surrounding a 16th-century Gothic church. A battered Fiat pulled up, and a slight, nattily dressed figure stepped out: Pino Maniaci, 57, owner and chief reporter for Telejato, a tiny Partinico-based TV station. Maniaci had declared war on the local Mafia—and paid dearly for doing so.

A FORMER BUSINESSMAN, Maniaci took over the failing enterprise from the Italian Communist Party in 1999. "I made a bet with myself that I could rescue the station," he told me, lighting a cigarette as we walked from the piazza

"IT'S A GOOD START," COLAJANNI SAID, "BUT THOUSANDS ARE STILL PAYING IN PALERMO. WE NEED . . . TIME TO DEVELOP A MASS MOVEMENT."

through narrow lanes toward his studio. At the time, the city was in the midst of a war between rival Mafia families. Unlike in Palermo, the violence here has never let up: eight people have been killed in feuds in just the past two years. The town's key position between the provinces of Trapani and Palermo has made it a continual battleground. For two years, Maniaci aired exposés about a mob-owned distillery in Partinico that was violating Sicily's antipollution statutes and pouring toxic fumes into the atmosphere. At one point he chained himself to the distillery's security fence in an effort to get police to shut it down. (It closed in 2005 but reopened last year after a legal battle.) He identified a house used by Bernard Provenzano and local Mafia chieftains to plan killings and other crimes: authorities confiscated it and knocked it down. In 2006 he got the scoop of a lifetime, joining police as they raided a tin shack near Corleone and captured Provenzano. The Mafia has burned Maniaci's car twice and repeatedly threatened to kill him; in 2008 a pair of hoodlums beat him outside his office. Maniaci went on the air the next day with a bruised face and denounced his attackers. After the beating, he declined an offer of round-the-clock police protection, saying it would make it impos-

sible for him to meet his "secret sources."

Maniaci led me up a narrow flight of stairs to his second-floor studio, its walls covered by caricatures and framed newspaper clips heralding his journalistic feats. He flopped down in a chair at a computer and fired up another cigarette. (He smokes three packs a day.) Then he began working the phones in advance of his 90-minute, live daily news broadcast. He was attempting to ferret out the identities of those responsible for torching the cars of two prominent local businessmen the night before. Leaping out of his chair, Maniaci thrust a news script into my hands and asked me to read it on the air—despite my rudimentary Italian. "You can do it!" he encouraged. Maniaci often asks visiting foreign reporters to join him on camera in the belief the appearances will showcase his international clout and thereby protect him from further Mafia attacks.

Telejato, which reaches 180,000 viewers in 25 communities, is a family operation: Maniaci's wife, Patrizia, 44, works as the station's editor; his son, Giovanni, is the cameraman and his daughter, Letizia, is a reporter. "My biggest mistake was to bring in the whole family," he told me. "Now they are as obsessed as I am." The station functions on a bare-bones budget, earning about €4,000 ($5,000) a month from advertising, which covers gasoline and TV equipment but leaves almost nothing for salaries. "We are a little fire that we hope will become a big fire," Maniaci said, adding that he sometimes feels he is fighting a losing battle. In recent months, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's government had introduced legislation that could weaken Sicily's anti-Mafia cam-

According to one 2008 study, 80 percent of businesses in Palermo (left: the intersection known as Quattro Canti, or Four Corners, in the heart of its Old Town) still pay the *pizzo*, or protection money, which brings the Mafia in Sicily $1.2 billion a year. But the store Punto Pizzo Free (below left) sells only goods from artisans and manufacturers that refuse to pay the pizzo. Antonino Sofia (below: with paint chart) says his hardware store has had no run-ins with the Mafia since he joined the citizens group Addiopizzo (Goodbye Pizzo).

In his three years as the mayor of Corleone, Antonino Iannazzo (left) has worked to restore the town's reputation. He labeled one Mafia lieutenant "persona non grata" and turned a boss' birthplace into a museum of Mafia crimes.

matic granite ridges. At last I arrived in central Corleone: medieval buildings with balustraded iron balconies lined cobblestone alleys that snaked up a steep hillside; two giant sandstone pillars towered over a town of 11,000. In the nave of a crumbling Renaissance church near the center, I found Iannazzo—an ebullient, red-bearded 35-year-old, chomping on a cigar—showing off some restoration work to local journalists and business people.

In three years as Corleone's mayor, Iannazzo has taken a hands-on approach toward the Mafia. When Salvatore Riina's youngest son, Giuseppe Salvatore Riina, resettled in Corleone after getting out of prison on a technicality five and a half years into a nine-year sentence for money laundering, Iannazzo went on TV to declare him persona non grata. "I said, 'We don't want him here, not because we're afraid of him, but because it's not a good sign for the young people,'" he told me. "After years of trying to give them legal alternatives to the Mafia, one man like this can destroy all of our work." As it turned out, Riina went back to prison after his appeal was denied. By then, says Iannazzo, Riina "understood that staying in Corleone wouldn't be a good life for him—every time he went out of the house, he was surrounded by the *paparazzi*; he had no privacy." Iannazzo's main focus now is to provide

"AFTER YEARS OF TRYING TO GIVE THEM LEGAL ALTERNATIVES TO THE MAFIA, ONE MAN LIKE THIS CAN DESTROY ALL OF OUR WORK."

paign: one measure would impose stricter rules on wiretapping; another gave tax amnesty to anyone who repatriated cash deposited in secret overseas bank accounts, requiring them to pay only a 5 percent penalty. "We have Berlusconi. That's our problem," Maniaci told me. "We can't destroy the Mafia because of its connection with politics."

NOT EVERY POLITICIAN is in league with the Mafia. The day after speaking with Maniaci, I drove south from Palermo to meet Corleone Mayor Antonino Iannazzo, who, since his election in 2007, has been working to repair the town's reputation. The two-lane highway dipped and rose across the starkly beautiful Jato Valley, passing olive groves, clumps of cactus and pale green pastures that swept up toward dra-

jobs for the town's youth—the 16 percent unemployment rate is higher here than in much of the rest of Italy—to "wean them off their attraction to the Mafia life."

Iannazzo got into my car and directed me through a labyrinth of narrow streets to a two-story row house perched on a hillside. "This is where [Riina's successor] Bernardo Provenzano was born," he told me. The municipality seized the house from the Provenzanos in 2005; Iannazzo himself—then deputy mayor—helped evict Provenzano's two brothers. "They took their things and left in silence—and moved 50 yards down the street," he recalls. Iannazzo was remaking the house into a "laboratory of legality"—a combination of museum, workshop and retail space for anti-Mafia cooperatives such as Libera Terra. The mayor had even had

a hand in the design: stark metal banisters suggest prison bars while plexiglass sheets on the floors symbolize transparency. "We'll show the whole history of the Mafia in this region," he said, stopping in front of the burned-out remains of a car that had belonged to journalist Pino Maniaci.

Iannazzo still faces major challenges. Under a controversial new law passed by Italy's parliament this past December, a confiscated Mafia property must be auctioned off within 90 days if a socially responsible organization has not taken it over. The law was intended to raise revenue for the cash-strapped Italian government; critics fear it will put properties back into the hands of organized crime. That's "a ridiculously short period," said Francesco Galante, of Libera Terra, who said it can take up to eight years for groups like his to acquire confiscated Mafia assets. And few citizens or even cooperatives can match the Mafia's spending power. "Judges all over Italy protested against this bill," Galante told me. "We got signatures and held events to try and stop this decision, but it didn't work." He estimates that some 5,000 seized properties could revert to the Mafia. (Since then, a new national agency was created to manage seized assets; Galante says it may mitigate that danger.)

Franco Nicastro, president of the Society of Sicilian Journalists, considers his organization lucky to have acquired one of the most powerful symbols of the island's dark past before the deadline: the former home of Salvatore Riina in Palermo, where The Beast had lived under an assumed name, with his family, before his capture. A tasteful split-level villa with a date-palm garden beneath mountains a few miles away, it could be a screenwriter's retreat in the Hollywood Hills. The house provided an atmosphere of suburban comfort to the man who had plotted the murders of Falcone, Borsellino and scores of others in the early 1990s. "He never met any fellow Mafiosi in this place," Nicastro told me, throwing open shutters and allowing sunlight to flood the empty living room. "This was strictly a place for him, his wife and children." This year it will reopen as the society's headquarters, with workshops and exhibitions honoring the eight reporters who were murdered by the Mafia between the late 1960s and 1993. "Riina could kill journalists, but journalism didn't die," Nicastro said, leading the way to a drained swimming pool and a tiled patio where Riina liked to barbecue. Acquiring mob properties like this may become more difficult if Italy's new law takes hold. But for Sicilians awakening from a long, Mafia-imposed nightmare, there will be no turning back.

Some of Sicily's most violent and powerful Mafia figures have come from the mountain town of Corleone (above: pop. 11,000), 20 miles south of Palermo. Novelist Mario Puzo bestowed the town's name on the American family central to his 1969 novel, *The Godfather*. Corleone Mayor Iannazzo says his main focus is to find jobs for the town's young people—the 16 percent unemployment rate here is higher than in other parts of Italy—in order to "wean them off their attraction to the Mafia life."

BEFORE THERE WAS LIFE

Where did life's building blocks come from?
And how did they connect four billion years ago?
Mineralogist Bob Hazen thinks he has the answers

BY HELEN FIELDS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMANDA LUCIDON

A fossil collector since childhood, Hazen (inspecting ancient seashells on Chesapeake Bay) has come up with new scenarios for life's beginnings on earth billions of years ago.

A HILLY GREEN CAMPUS IN Washington, D.C. houses two departments of the Carnegie Institution for Science: the Geophysical Laboratory and the quaintly named Department of Terrestrial Magnetism. When the institution was founded, in 1902, measuring the earth's magnetic field was a pressing scientific need for makers of nautical maps. Now, the people who work here—people like Bob Hazen—have more fundamental concerns. Hazen and his colleagues are using the institution's "pressure bombs"—breadbox-size metal cylinders that squeeze and heat minerals to the insanely high temperatures and pressures found inside the earth—to decipher nothing less than the origins of life.

Hazen, a mineralogist, is investigating how the first organic chemicals—the kind found in living things—formed and then found each other nearly four billion years ago. He began this research in 1996, about two decades after scientists discovered hydrothermal vents—cracks in the deep ocean floor where water is heated to hundreds of degrees Fahrenheit by molten rock. The vents fuel strange underwater ecosystems inhabited by giant worms, blind shrimp and

sulfur-eating bacteria. Hazen and his colleagues believed the complex, high-pressure vent environment—with rich mineral deposits and fissures spewing hot water into cold—might be where life began.

Hazen realized he could use the pressure bomb to test this theory. The device (technically known as an "internally heated, gas media pressure vessel") is like a super-high-powered kitchen pressure cooker, producing temperatures exceeding 1,800 degrees and pressures up to 10,000 times that of the atmosphere at sea level. (If something were to go wrong, the ensuing explosion could take out a good part of the lab building; the operator runs the pressure bomb from behind an armored barrier.)

In his first experiment with the device, Hazen encased a few milligrams of water, an organic chemical called pyruvate and a powder that produces carbon dioxide all in a tiny capsule made of gold (which does not react with the chemicals inside) that he had welded himself. He put three capsules into the pressure bomb at 480 degrees and 2,000 atmospheres. And then he went to lunch. When he took the capsules out two hours later, the contents had turned into tens of thousands of different compounds. In later experiments, he combined nitrogen, ammonia and other molecules plausibly present on the early earth. In these experiments, Hazen and his colleagues created all sorts of organic molecules, including amino acids and sugars—the stuff of life.

HAZEN'S EXPERIMENTS marked a turning point. Before them, origins-of-life research had been guided by a scenario scripted in 1871 by Charles Darwin himself: "But if (and oh! what a big if!) we could conceive in some warm little pond, with all sorts of ammonia and phosphoric salts, light, heat, electricity, etc., present, that a proteine compound was chemically formed ready to undergo still more complex changes. . . . "

In 1952, Stanley Miller, a graduate student in chemistry at the University of Chicago, attempted to create Darwin's dream. Miller set up a container holding water (representing the early ocean) connected by glass tubes to one containing ammonia, methane and hydrogen—a mixture scientists of the day thought approximated the early atmosphere. A flame heated the water, sending vapor upward. In the atmosphere flask, electric sparks simulated lightning. The experiment was such a long shot that Miller's adviser, Harold Urey, thought it a waste of time. But over the next few days, the water turned deep red. Miller had created a broth of amino acids.

Forty-four years later, Bob Hazen's pressure bomb experiments would show that not just lightning storms but also hydrothermal vents potentially could have sparked life. His work soon led him to a more surprising conclusion: the basic molecules of life, it turns out, are able to form in all sorts of places: near hydrothermal vents, volcanoes, even on meteorites. Cracking open space rocks, astrobiologists have discovered amino acids, compounds similar to sugars and fatty acids, and nucleobases found in RNA and DNA. So it's even possible that some of the first building blocks of life on earth came from outer space.

"A FEW YEARS BEFORE, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN LAUGHED OUT OF THE ORIGINS-OF-LIFE COMMUNITY."

To mimic conditions for life on early earth, Hazen (in the Carnegie lab) used a "pressure bomb" to heat and compress chemicals.

Hazen's findings came at an auspicious time. "A few years before, we would have been laughed out of the origins-of-life community," he says. But NASA, then starting up its astrobiology program, was looking for evidence that life could have evolved in odd environments—such as on other planets or their moons. "NASA [wanted] justification for going to Europa, to Titan, to Ganymede, to Callisto, to Mars," says Hazen. If life does exist there, it's likely to be under the surface, in warm, high-pressure environments.

Back on earth, Hazen says that by 2000 he had concluded that "making the basic building blocks of life is easy." A harder question: How did the right building blocks get incorporated? Amino acids come in multiple forms, but only some are used by living things to form proteins. How did they find each other?

IN A WINDOWED CORNER of a lab building at the Carnegie Institution, Hazen is drawing molecules on a notepad and sketching the earliest steps on the road to life. "We've got a prebiotic ocean and down in the ocean floor, you've got rocks," he says. "And basically there's molecules here that are floating around in solution, but it's a very dilute soup." For a newly formed amino acid in the early ocean, it must have been a lonely life indeed. The familiar phrase "primordial soup" sounds rich and thick, but it was no beef stew. It was probably just a few molecules here and there in a vast ocean. "So the chances of a molecule over here bumping into this one, and then actually a chemical reaction going on to form

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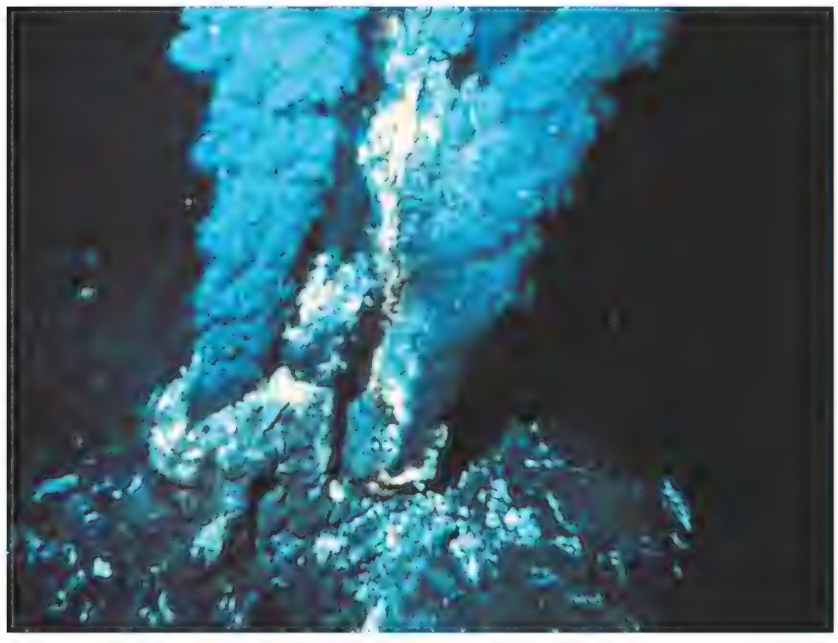

Scientists are searching for life's origins beyond the "warm little pond" that, 140 years ago, Charles Darwin speculated was the starting place. Clockwise from top: Kateryna Klochko (in Hazen's lab) combines mineral dust and amino acids, the building blocks of proteins; some meteorites (a magnified cross section of one found in Chile) contain amino acids, raising the possibility that life was seeded from space; despite high temperatures and pressures, deep-sea hydrothermal vents harbor living things.

LOWER LEFT: SCIENCE SOURCE

some kind of larger structure, is just infinitesimally small," Hazen continues. He thinks that rocks—whether the ore deposits that pile up around hydrothermal vents or those that line a tide pool on the surface—may have been the matchmakers that helped lonely amino acids find each other.

Rocks have texture, whether shiny and smooth or craggy and rough. Molecules on the surface of minerals have texture, too. Hydrogen atoms wander on and off a mineral's surface, while electrons react with various molecules in the vicinity. An amino acid that drifts near a mineral could be attracted to its surface. Bits of amino acids might form a bond; form enough bonds and you've got a protein.

Back at the Carnegie lab, Hazen's colleagues are looking into the first step in that courtship: Kateryna Klochko is preparing an experiment that—when combined with other experiments and a lot of math—should show how certain

molecules stick to minerals. Do they adhere tightly to the mineral, or does a molecule attach in just one place, leaving the rest of it mobile and thereby increasing the chances it will link up to other molecules?

Klochko gets out a rack, plastic tubes and the liquids she needs. "It's going to be very boring and tedious," she warns. She puts a tiny dab of a powdered mineral in a four-inch plastic tube, then adds arginine, an amino acid, and a liquid to adjust the acidity. Then, while a gas bubbles through the solution, she waits . . . for eight minutes. The work may seem tedious indeed, but it takes concentration. "That's the thing, each step is critical," she says. "Each of them, if you make a mistake, the data will look weird, but you won't know where you made a mistake." She mixes the ingredients seven times, in seven tubes. As she works, "The Scientist" comes on the radio: "Noooooobody saaaaid it was easyyyy," sings Coldplay vocalist Chris Martin.

After two hours, the samples go into a rotator, a kind of fast Ferris wheel for test tubes, to mix all night. In the morning, Klochko will measure how much arginine remains in the liquid; the rest of the amino acid will have stuck to the mineral powder's tiny surfaces.

She and other researchers will repeat the same experiment with different minerals and different molecules, over and over in various combinations. The goal is for Hazen and his colleagues to be able to predict more complex interactions, like those that may have taken place in the earth's early oceans.

How long will it take to go from studying how molecules interact with minerals to understanding how life began? No one knows. For one thing, scientists have never settled on a definition of life. Everyone has a general idea of what it is and that self-replication and passing information from generation to generation are key. Gerald Joyce, of the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, jokes that the definition should be "something like 'that which is squishy.'"

Hazen's work has implications beyond the origins of life. "Amino-acids-sticking-to-crystals is everywhere in the environment," he says. Amino acids in your body stick to titanium joints; films of bacteria grow inside pipes; everywhere proteins and minerals meet, amino acids are interacting with crystals. "It's every rock, it's every soil, it's the walls of the building, it's microbes that interact with your teeth and bones, it's everywhere," Hazen says.

"SOME OF THEM ARE INCREDIBLY CUTE," SAYS HAZEN. "THIS BULBOUS NOSE—YOU WANT TO HUG THEM."

Hazen began collecting trilobites—extinct marine arthropods (a *Paralejurus*)—when he was a child: "I just thought they were cool."

AT HIS WEEKEND RETREAT overlooking the Chesapeake Bay, Hazen, 61, peers through binoculars at some black-and-white ducks bobbing around in circles and stirring the otherwise still water. He thinks they're herding fish—a behavior he's never seen before. He calls for his wife, Margee, to come take a look: "There's this really interesting phenomenon going on with the buffleheads!"

Living room shelves hold things the couple has found nearby: beach glass, a basketful of minerals, and fossilized barnacles, coral and great white shark teeth. A 15-million-year-old whale jawbone, discovered on the beach at low tide, is spread out in pieces on the dining room table, where Hazen is cleaning it. "It was part of a living, breathing whale when this was a tropical paradise," he says.

Hazen traces his interest in prehistory to his Cleveland childhood, growing up not far from a fossil quarry. "I collected my first trilobite when I was 9 or 10," he says. "I just thought they were cool," he says of the marine arthropods that went extinct millions of years ago. After his family moved to New Jersey, his eighth-grade science teacher encouraged him to check out the minerals in nearby towns. "He gave me maps and he gave me directions and he gave me specimens, and my parents would take me to these places," says Hazen. "So I just got hooked."

After taking a paleontology class together at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hazen and Margee Hindle, his future wife, started collecting trilobites. They now have thousands. "Some of them are incredibly cute," says Hazen. "This bulbous nose—you want to hug them."

There are trilobites all over Hazen's office and a basement guest room at the Hazens' Bethesda, Maryland, home—they cover shelves and fill desk drawers and cabinets. There's even trilobite art by his now grown children, Ben, 34, who is studying to be an art therapist, and Liz, 32, a teacher. "This is the ultimate cute trilobite," he says, reaching into a cabinet and taking out a *Paralejurus*. "How can you not love that?"

Hazen calls himself a "natural collector." After he and Margee bought a picture frame that just happened to hold a photograph of a brass band, they started buying other pictures of brass bands; eventually they wrote a history of brass bands—*Music Men*—and a time in America when almost every town had its own. (Bob has played trumpet profession-

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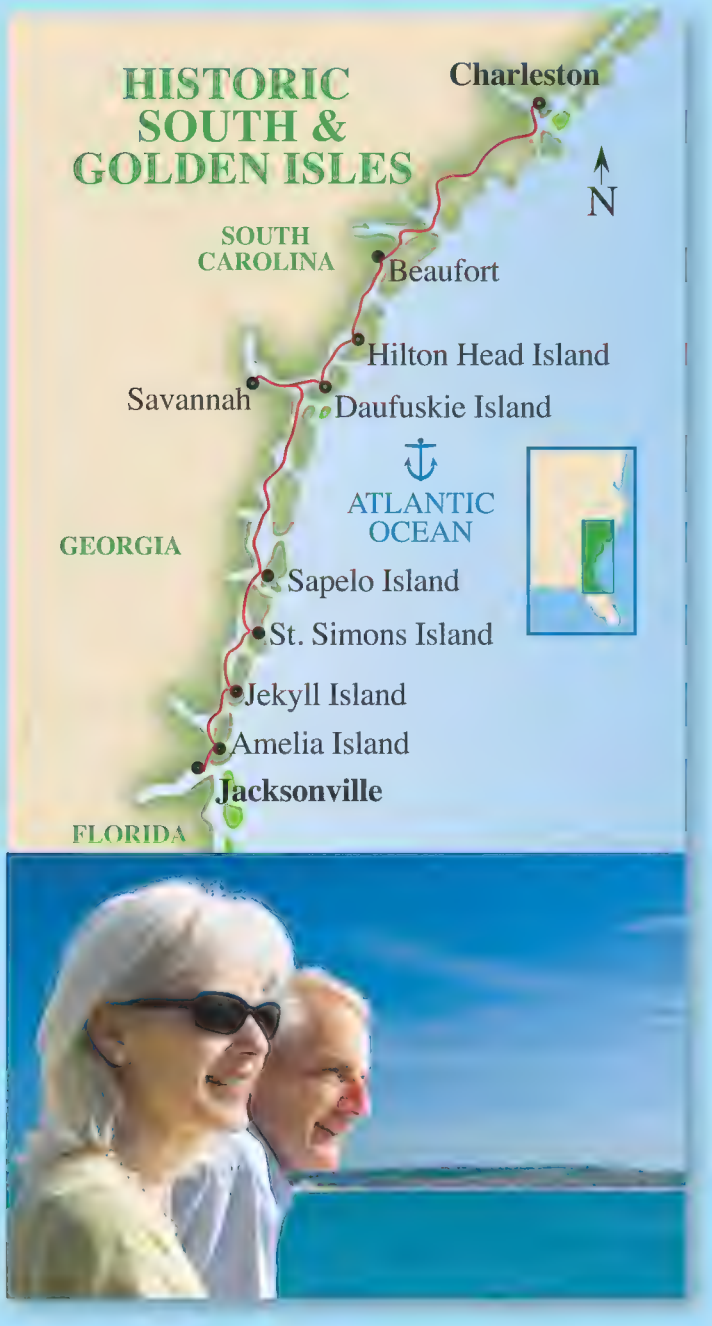

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The first organic molecules may have needed rocks to bring them together, says Hazen (with wife Margee near their Chesapeake Bay weekend retreat). But the relationship goes both ways: once living things were established, they created new minerals.

ally since 1966.) He has also published a collection of 18th- and 19th-century poems about geology, most of which, he says, are pretty bad ("*And O ye rocks! schist, gneiss, whate'er ye be/Ye varied strata, names too hard for me*"). But the couple tend not to hold on to things. "As weird as this sounds, as a collector, I've never been acquisitive," Bob says. "To have been able to hold them and study them up close is really a privilege. But they shouldn't be in private hands." Which is why the Hazen Collection of Band Photographs and Ephemera, ca. 1818-1931, is now at the National Museum of American History. Harvard has the mineral collection he started in eighth grade, and the Hazens are in the process of donating their trilobites to the National Museum of Natural History.

After considering, for some time, how minerals may have helped life evolve, Hazen is now investigating the other side of the equation: how life spurred the development of minerals. He explains that there were only about a dozen different minerals—including diamonds and graphite—in dust grains that pre-date the solar system. Another 50 or so formed as the sun ignited. On earth, volcanoes emitted basalt, and plate tectonics made ores of copper, lead and zinc. "The minerals become players in this sort of epic story of exploding stars and planetary formation and the triggering of plate tectonics," he says. "And then life plays a key role." By introducing oxygen into the atmosphere, photosynthesis made possible new kinds of minerals—turquoise, azurite and malachite, for example. Mosses and algae climbed onto land, breaking down rock and making clay, which made bigger plants possible, which made deeper soil, and so on. Today there are about 4,400 known minerals—more than two-thirds of which came into being only because of the way life changed the planet. Some of them were created exclusively by living organisms.

Everywhere he looks, Hazen says, he sees the same fascinating process: increasing complexity. "You see the same phenomena over and over, in languages and in material culture—in life itself. Stuff gets more complicated." It's the complexity of the hydrothermal vent environment—gushing hot water mixing with cold water near rocks, and ore deposits providing hard surfaces where newly formed amino acids could congregate—that makes it such a good candidate as a cradle of life. "Organic chemists have long used test tubes," he says, "but the origin of life uses rocks, it uses water, it uses atmosphere. Once life gets a foothold, the fact that the environment is so variable is what drives evolution." Minerals evolve, life arises and diversifies, and along come trilobites, whales, primates and, before you know it, brass bands.

HELEN FIELDS *has written about snakehead fish and the discovery of soft tissue in dinosaur fossils for* SMITHSONIAN.
AMANDA LUCIDON *is based in Washington, D.C.*

Watch more of Hazen's fossil collecting at smith.hy.pr/fossils

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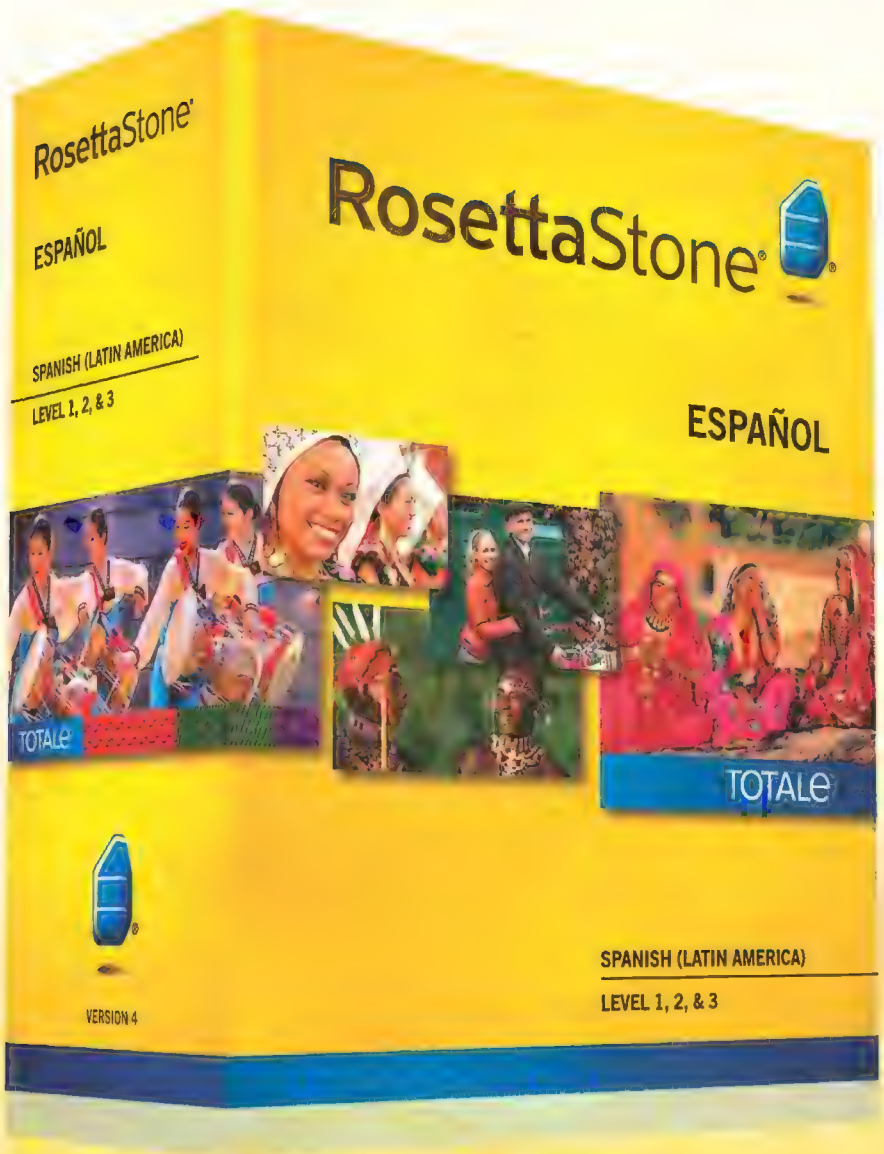

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BODY OF WORK

Photographer **Chris Rainier,** a protégé of Ansel Adams, has traveled the world documenting the impulse to embellish the human form

BY ABIGAIL TUCKER

Chris Rainier has seen bare flesh etched by the crudest of implements: old nails, sharpened bamboo sticks, barracuda teeth. The ink might be nothing more than sugar cane juice mixed with campfire soot. The important part is the meaning behind the marks.

"Blank skin," the photographer says, "is merely a canvas for a story."

Rainier has documented these stories in dozens of cultures across the globe. In New Guinea, a swirl of tattoos on a Tofi woman's face indicates her family lineage. The dark scrawls on a Cambodian monk's chest reflect his religious beliefs. A Los Angeles gang member's sprawling tattoos describe his street affiliation, and may even reveal if he's committed murder. Whether the bearer is a Maori chief in New Zealand or a Japanese mafia lord, tattoos express an indelible identity.

"They say, 'this is who I am, and what I have done,'" Rainier says.

Rainier's portraits are featured in a new film, *Tattoo Odyssey*, in which he photographs Mentawai people living in a remote village on the Indonesian island of Siberut. Their spider web-like tattoos,

For the Dyak people of Borneo, the world's third largest island, tattoos once commemorated headhunting expeditions. The markings on some modern Dyaks (left: Ernesto Kalum) represent "a modern interpretation of traditional headhunting tattoos," says photographer Chris Rainier. "When we have lost our tattoos," a Dyak elder once told Rainier, "we have lost our culture."

which echo the shapes and shadows of the forest, are meant to anchor the soul in the body and to attract benevolent spirits. The film premieres September 26th on the Smithsonian Channel.

Rainier's images "lifted a veil on something that wasn't accessible to us in Western culture," says Deborah Klochko, director of San Diego's Museum of Photographic Arts, which has displayed Rainier's portraits. His work, much of it presented in the 2006 book *Ancient Marks: The Sacred Origins of Tattoos and Body Marking*, may be the most comprehensive collection of its kind, Klochko says. Yet, she points out, "he's not an anthropologist. A scientist would take another kind of picture of the same markings. He brings a different sensibility, an emotional connection."

Rainier was Ansel Adams' last assistant—they worked together in the early 1980s, until Adams' death in 1984. Like his mentor, Rainier is primarily a black-and-white photographer. Unlike Adams, however, he is less captivated by landscapes than by the topography of the body, and he specialized in portraits. In the 1990s, while traveling the world to chronicle waning indigenous cultures, he got interested in traditional tattooing—which has cropped up from Greenland to Thailand at one time or another—and its sister art, scarification, a cutting practice more common in West Africa and elsewhere. Some of those customs, Rainier says, are dying out as modernization penetrates even remote areas.

Yet he is also fascinated by the current tattoo craze in the United States, apparent everywhere from Nevada's Burning Man art festival to Pacific Coast surf beaches to Midwestern shopping

RAINIER: 90TH PARALLEL PRODUCTIONS LTD.

Photographer Rainier (above left: with Mentawai) has spent the better part of two decades photographing a wide variety of ornamental body art: from tattoos and scarring to piercings and paintings. Clockwise from above: the mistress of a boss in Japan's Yakuza, or organized crime society, is adorned with symbols from Yakuza mythology. A woman's hands in southern Morocco are painted with a temporary henna stain in celebration of a wedding. The henna can last more than a week. For the Boni tribe in West Africa's Burkina Faso, ritual facial scarring begins in adolescence as an initiation into adulthood. It's "a sign of bravery as well as beauty," says Rainier.

malls. Once confined to a few subcultures, tattooing has today gone mainstream: according to a 2006 Pew survey, 40 percent of Americans between the ages of 26 and 40 have been tattooed.

The modern West's first recorded encounter with the Polynesian practice of *tattowing* dates from 1769, when Joseph Banks—a naturalist aboard the British ship *Endeavour*—watched a 12-year-old girl (the "patient," he called her, though modern aficionados might prefer the term "collector") being extensively adorned. Banks' description is brief but harrowing: "It was done with a large instrument about 2 inches long containing about 30 teeth," he wrote in his journal. "Every stroke . . . drew blood." The girl wailed and writhed but two women held her down, occasionally beating her. The agony lasted more than an hour.

Yet sailors must have been intrigued. Soon they were returning from the South Pacific sporting tattoos of their own. The English recoiled (apparently unaware that ancient Europeans had also been devoted collectors), and as the colonial powers extended their reach around the globe, native people—often urged by missionaries—gradually began to relinquish their traditions, an abandonment that continues today. Back in Europe, tattoos were persistently associated with unruly sailors, although they did achieve a subversive glamour in certain circles: in the early 1900s, the future Marchioness of Londonderry tattooed a snake, a star and a coat of arms on her leg, and King George V boasted a Japanese-style dragon.

Today people are appropriating these ancient practices, Rainier believes, because they want to carve out an identity in a chaotic postindustrial age by inscribing shoulders and shins with symbols of love, death and belonging.

Even if a design has no literal significance, the act of tattooing is an initiation rite in itself. "A tattoo stood—and among many peoples still

One of Rainier's recent projects—to photograph the Mentawai, a remote tribe living on the Indonesian island of Siberut—is the subject of a documentary airing on cable television this month. The spider web-like tattoos on Aman Payung (far left) and Aman Nippai echo the shapes and mythological creatures of the forest. Images like these, says San Diego photography museum director Deborah Klochko, "lifted a veil on something that wasn't accessible to us in Western culture."

stands—for many things, including the ability to tolerate pain," says Nina Jablonski, a Pennsylvania State University anthropologist and author of *Skin: A Natural History*. Sometimes, physical loveliness becomes inseparable from personal suffering. In West African nations like Togo and Burkina Faso, where scarification is common, Rainier would often ask to photograph the most beautiful man and woman in a given village. "Inevitably they would be the most scarred," Rainier says. "You didn't gain your beauty until you were scarred."

Taken as art, tattoos unite disparate cultures, says Skip Pahl, who displayed Rainier's photographs at California's Oceanside Museum of Art. The images attracted an unusually diverse group of museumgoers: Samoan immigrants, surfers, gang members, U.S. Marines and devout Latinos, all of whom have their own tattoo aesthetic. The exhibition was accompanied by a runway show in which tattoo artists paraded their most exquisitely inked customers.

After visiting the Mentawai last year—a trip previously thwarted by security concerns after September 11, 2001, and by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami—Rainier says his tattoo portfolio is at last complete. His own epidermis remains thus far unimproved, but that's about to change: "I said to myself once the project is over and done that I will pick an artist and a design," he says. "I'm at that point now."

Having spent 20 years exploring the power and permanence of tattoos, however, he's finding the selection very difficult: "We live in a culture where everything is disposable, and it's like, 'wow, that's forever.' "

ABIGAIL TUCKER *is the magazine's staff writer. Photographer* **CHRIS RAINIER** *is working on a book about traditional masks.*

Tattoos are "a visual manifestation of each person's approach to life and the journey they wish to take," says the photographer. Clockwise from above: the "modern primitivism" movement (three of its tattoo artists beneath San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge) appropriates traditional tattoo designs from many cultures. Tattooing was outlawed in New Zealand in 1907 but the indigenous Maori people (a full facial moko, or mask pattern) are recapturing their heritage through body art, Rainier says. In Thailand, tattoos often combine Buddhist religious symbols with animistic forest or animal images (a young Buddhist monk).

View more of Chris Rainier's photography at smith.hy.pr/bodyart

A VIKING

Beneath Oxford University archaeologists have uncovered a medieval

"In many respects the Vikings were the medieval equivalent of organized crime," says Simon Keynes, a professor of Anglo-Saxon history at Cambridge University. "They engaged in extortion on a massive scale, using the threat of violence to extract silver from England." (Above: an illuminated manuscript, circa A.D. 1130, depicting Viking ships attacking Britain.)

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION COULD begin on new student housing at one of Oxford University's 38 colleges, St. John's, archaeologists were summoned to investigate the site in January 2008. After just a few hours of digging, one archaeologist discovered the remains of a 4,000-year-old religious complex—an earthwork enclosure, or henge, built by late Neolithic tribesmen, probably for a sun-worshiping cult. About 400 feet in diameter, the temple was one of the largest of Britain's prehistoric henges, of which more than 100 have been found.

Later, the archaeologists found pits full of broken pottery and food debris suggesting that people had used the henge as a medieval garbage dump millennia after it had been dug. Excited, they began searching for items that might reveal details of daily life in the Middle Ages. Instead they found bones. *Human* bones.

"At first we thought it was just the remains of one individual," says Sean Wallis of Thames Valley Archaeological Services, the company that did the excavating. "Then, to our surprise, we realized that corpses had been dumped one on top of another. Wherever we dug, there were more of them. Not only did we have a 4,000-year-old prehistoric temple, but now a mass grave as well."

After one month of digging at the grave site and two years of lab tests, the researchers concluded that between 34 and 38 individuals were buried in the grave, all of them victims of violence. Some 20 skeletons bore punctures in their vertebrae and pelvic bones, and 27 skulls were broken or cracked, indicating traumatic head injury. To judge from markings on the ribs, at least a dozen had been stabbed in the back. One individual had been decapitated; attempts were made on five others.

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MYSTERY

atrocity that colored the course of English history

BY DAVID KEYS

Radiocarbon analysis of the bones convinced the archaeologists that the remains date from A.D. 960 to 1020—the period in which the Anglo-Saxon monarchy peaked in power. Originally from Germany, Anglo-Saxons had invaded England almost six centuries earlier, after the Roman Empire had fallen into disarray. They established their own kingdoms and converted to Christianity. After decades of conflict, England enjoyed a degree of stability in the tenth century under the rule of King Edgar the Peaceful.

But "peaceful" is a relative term. Public executions were common. British archaeologists have discovered some 20 "execution cemeteries" across the country—testifying to a harsh penal code that claimed the lives of up to 3 percent of the male population. One such site in East Yorkshire contains the remains of six decapitated individuals.

The Oxford grave, however, didn't fit the profile of an execution cemetery, which typically contains remains of people put to death over many centuries—not all at once, as at Oxford. And execution victims tended to be various ages and body types. By contrast, the bodies buried at Oxford were those of vigorous males of fighting age, most between 16 and 35 years old. Most were unusually large; an examination of the muscle-attachment areas of their bones revealed extremely robust physiques. Some victims had suffered serious burns to their heads, backs, pelvic regions and arms.

The most telling clue would emerge from a lab analysis, in which scientists measured atomic variations within the skeletal bone collagen. The tests indicated that the men ate, on average, more fish and shellfish than did Anglo-Saxons.

The mounting evidence increasingly pointed to an astonishing conclusion: this was a mass grave of Viking warriors.

British archaeologists looking for evidence of prehistoric activity in the English county of Dorset discovered instead a mass grave holding 54 male skeletons (above)—all the victims had been decapitated with sharp weapons. Archaeologists believe that soldiers brought a group of Vikings to the site to be executed. Their bodies were then unceremoniously dumped in an ancient quarry.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

IN THE LATE EIGHTH CENTURY A.D., the Vikings—a Scandinavian people from Denmark, Norway and Sweden—began a 300-year campaign of pillaging and piracy throughout Europe. Some scholars say that political changes (especially the emergence of fewer yet more powerful rulers) forced local Viking chieftains to seek new sources of revenue through foreign conquests. Others point to advances in shipbuilding that enabled longer voyages—allowing the Vikings to establish trade networks extending as far as the Mediterranean. But when an economic recession hit Europe in the ninth century, Scandinavian seamen increasingly turned from trading to pillaging.

Most historians believe that England suffered more from the Vikings than other European countries. In the first recorded attack, in A.D. 793, Vikings raided an undefended monastic community at Lindisfarne in the northeast. Alcuin of York, an Anglo-Saxon scholar, recorded the onslaught: "We and our fathers have now lived in this fair land for nearly three hundred and fifty years, and never before has such a terror been seen in Britain as we have now suffered at the hands of a pagan people. Such a voyage was not thought possible. The church of St. Cuthbert is spattered with the blood of the priests of God."

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a contemporary historical account, records that the Vikings waged some 50 battles and destroyed or ravaged scores of settlements. Dublin, one of the largest Viking cities in the British Isles, became a major European slave-trading center, where, historians estimate, tens of thousands of kidnapped Irishmen, Scotsmen, Anglo-Saxons and others were bought and sold.

"In many respects the Vikings were the medieval equivalent of organized crime," says Simon Keynes, a professor of Anglo-Saxon history at Cambridge University. "They engaged in extortion on a massive scale, using the threat of violence to extract vast quantities of silver from England and some other vulnerable western European states."

"Certainly the Vikings did all these things, but so did everyone else," says Dagfinn Skre, a professor of archaeology at the University of Oslo. "Although admittedly, the Vikings did it on a grander scale."

Martin Carver, an emeritus professor of archaeology at the University of York, characterizes the antagonism between the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians as part of a wider clash of ideologies. Between the sixth and ninth centuries, Vikings in Scandinavia preferred to be organized "in loose confederations, favoring enterprise," says Carver. But other parts of Europe, such as Britain, yearned for a more orderly, centralized government—and looked to the Roman Empire as a model.

"Never before has such a terror been seen in Britain," wrote an Anglo-Saxon scholar of the A.D. 793 attack on the monastic community at Lindisfarne. (Below: a grave marker believed to depict Viking warriors, carved circa A.D. 900.)

MAP: GUILBERT GATES; TED SPIEGEL / CORBIS

Lab analyses of the remains uncovered by archaeologists (above left: Sean Wallis, in Oxford with skull distorted by camera angle; above right: excavators in Dorset) showed that the victims had likely come from Scandinavia.

Only one Anglo-Saxon kingdom—Wessex, ruled by Alfred the Great—is known to have withstood the Viking invasion. Alfred and his son, Edward, built up an army and navy and constructed a network of fortifications; then Edward and his successors wrested back control of those areas the Vikings had taken over, thus paving the way for English unification.

After decades of peace, Vikings again raided England, in A.D. 980. At the time, the Anglo-Saxon ruler was King Aethelred the Unraed (literally "the ill-advised"). As his name suggests, popular history has portrayed him as a mediocre successor to Alfred the Great and Edgar the Peaceful. The 12th-century historian William of Malmesbury wrote that Aethelred "occupied rather than governed" the kingdom. "The career of his life was said to have been cruel in the beginning, wretched in the middle and disgraceful in the end."

To avert war, Aethelred paid the Vikings some 26,000 pounds in silver between A.D. 991 and 994. In the years that followed, the king employed many of them as mercenaries to discourage other Vikings from attacking England.

But, in A.D. 997, some of the mercenaries turned on their royal employer and attacked the Anglo-Saxon southern counties. In early A.D. 1002, Aethelred again tried to buy off the Vikings—this time with 24,000 pounds in silver.

The geopolitical situation changed in England's favor only when Aethelred made an alliance with Normandy and sealed the deal by marrying the Duke of Normandy's sister in A.D. 1002. Possibly emboldened by the support of a powerful ally, Aethelred decided to take pre-emptive action before the Danes again broke the truce.

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Aethelred was "informed" that Danish mercenaries intended to "beguile him out of his life." (It is unknown whether an informer learned of an actual plot, or if Aethelred and his council fabricated the threat.) Aethelred then set in motion one of the most heinous acts of mass murder in English history, committed on St. Brice's Day, November 13, 1002. As he himself recounted in a charter written two years later, "a decree was sent out by me, with the counsel of my leading men and magnates, to the effect that all the Danes who had sprung up in this island, sprouting like cockle [weeds] amongst the wheat, were to be destroyed by a most just extermination."

PRIOR TO 2008, the only known inhabitants of the St. John's College garden had been the songbirds and squirrels that darted across the neatly cropped lawn and hid in an ancient beech tree. Generations of dons and students had strolled across that greenery, unsuspecting of what lay beneath.

The lab data indicating that the men buried there for 1,000 years had eaten lots of seafood, plus the burn markings and other evidence, convinced the archaeologists that the grave probably held victims of the St. Brice's Day massacre. Aethelred himself recounted exactly how the residents of Oxford killed the Danes in a local church: "Striving to escape death, [the Danes] entered [a] sanctuary of Christ, having broken by force the doors and bolts, and resolved to make a refuge

DAMIAN HALLIWELL / OXFORD MAIL; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

and defence for themselves therein against the people of the town and the suburbs; but when all the people in pursuit strove, forced by necessity, to drive them out, and could not, they set fire to the [building's] timbers and burnt [it] down."

Wallis, the archaeologist in charge at Oxford, surmises that the townspeople loaded the corpses onto a cart and drove out through the north gate of the city, past land that today encompasses the Oxford colleges of Balliol and most of St. John's, then threw the Vikings into the prehistoric henge—the largest ditch nearest the city's northern exit.

A year after this discovery, another team of investigators, from the company Oxford Archaeology, were looking for evidence of prehistoric activity at a site 90 miles to the southwest in the English county of Dorset, near Weymouth, when they discovered a second mass grave. This one held the skeletons of 54 well-built, fighting-age males, all of whom had been decapitated with sharp weapons, most likely swords. Lab tests of the teeth suggested the men were Scandinavians. The ratio between various types of oxygen atoms in the skeletons' tooth enamel indicates the victims came from a cold region (one man from inside the Arctic Circle). Radiocarbon dating placed the victims' deaths between A.D. 910 and 1030; historical records of Viking activities in England narrow that to between A.D. 980 and 1009. The corpses had been unceremoniously dumped in a chalk and flint quarry that had been dug hundreds of years earlier, possibly during Roman times. Although no historical account of the massacre exists, the archaeologists believe the Vikings were apprehended and brought to the site to be executed.

The discovery of the two mass graves may resolve a question that has long vexed historians. In the centuries following the St. Brice's Day massacre, many chroniclers believed that the Danish community in England (a substantial percentage of the population) was targeted for mass murder, akin to a pogrom. Certainly there was undisguised hatred for the Scandinavians, who were described by contemporary writers as "a most vile people," "a filthy pestilence" and "the hated ones." But more recently, the massacre has been seen more as a police action against only those who posed a military threat to the government. The discovery of the two mass graves supports this view, since victims were found where the rebellious mercenaries would have been stationed: close to royal administrative centers (usually towns or important royal estates) on or near England's south coast and in the Thames Valley. By contrast, no such graves have been found in the region of eastern England once known as the Danelaw, which was populated by descendants of Scandinavian settlers. "I would estimate that out of a total population of around two million in England, perhaps half were of Scandinavian or partly Scandinavian origin—most of whom were loyal subjects," says Ian Howard, a historian writing a biography of Aethelred. "I think it inherently unlikely that the king ever intended to kill them all, as it would obviously have been impossible to do so."

Far from being just a ghoulish footnote to medieval history, Aethelred's massacre of the Danes likely reinforced Danish determination to attack England and set in motion a chain of events that would change the course of England's future. In A.D. 1003, the year after the massacres, King Svein of Denmark

The Viking massacre ordered by King Aethelred (opposite top) likely prompted the Danes to launch a massive fleet of ships in retaliation (above: an illustration from an Anglo-Saxon manuscript, circa A.D. 1020 to 1050).

DAVID KEYS *is* The Independent's *archaeology correspondent*.

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launched his own assault against a much wider swath of Anglo-Saxon England. This renewed aggression continued off and on for more than a decade, inspiring a level of terror the Anglo-Saxons had not faced since the first Viking invasions a century and a half earlier. An Anglo-Danish text, the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, written around A.D. 1041 or 1042, described the Danish war fleet of 1016: "What adversary could gaze upon the lions, terrible in the glitter of their gold . . . all these on the ships, and not feel dread and fear in the face of a king with so great a fighting force?"

Both circumstantial and historical evidence suggests that revenge was at least part of the motivation for Svein's invasions. There were almost certainly blood ties between Aethelred's victims and Danish nobility. According to medieval chronicler William of Malmesbury, Svein's sister (or, possibly, half sister) Gunnhild was a victim of the St. Brice's Day massacre (although her body has never been found). Neither her gender nor her royal blood saved her, probably because she was the wife of Pallig, one of the turncoat mercenaries. Wrote William of Malmesbury: "[She was] beheaded with the other Danes, though she declared plainly that the shedding of her blood would cost all England dear."

Gunnhild's words proved prophetic. The Danes ultimately conquered England, in A.D. 1016, and Canute, the son of Svein, was crowned the nation's king in London's St. Paul's Cathedral in January 1017. Twenty-five years later, the Anglo-Saxons would regain the crown, but only for a generation. The Scandinavians, who had refused to renounce the throne, embarked on yet another onslaught against England in September 1066—less than a fortnight before William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, launched his own invasion of the country.

Although the English pushed back the Scandinavian invaders, the effort so weakened the Anglo-Saxons that they were defeated by William at the Battle of Hastings, also in 1066. The Norman Conquest consolidated the unification of England, as the new rulers introduced a more centralized, hierarchal government. The Anglo-Saxons would rise again, their culture and language merging with that of their oppressors to produce a new nation—the predecessor of modern England, and eventually an empire that would span half the globe.

Below right: A forensic expert examines a skeleton from the Dorset site. Below from top: cracked skulls found at the Oxford site showed signs of sword injuries, while puncture marks in the vertebrae were suggestive of stab wounds.

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RUNNING DRY

The once mighty Colorado River—diverted and drained—no longer surges to the sea. Is it a sign of things to come? **BY SARAH ZIELINSKI**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER MCBRIDE

Reservoirs along the river may never rise to previous levels. (Here: Utah's Lake Powell has a "bathtub ring" that rises at least 70 feet above the water.)

FROM ITS SOURCE HIGH IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, the Colorado River channels water south nearly 1,500 miles, over falls, through deserts and canyons, to the lush wetlands of a vast delta in Mexico and into the Gulf of California.

That is, it did so for six million years.

Then, beginning in the 1920s, Western states began divvying up the Colorado's water, building dams and diverting the flow hundreds of miles, to Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix and other fast-growing cities. The river now serves 30 million people in seven U.S. states and Mexico, with 70 percent or more of its water siphoned off to irrigate 3.5 million acres of cropland.

The damming and diverting of the Colorado, the nation's seventh-longest river, may be seen by some as a triumph of engineering and by others as a crime against nature, but there are ominous new twists. The river has been running especially low for the past decade, as drought has gripped the Southwest. It still tumbles through the Grand Canyon, much to the delight of rafters and other visitors. And boaters still roar across Nevada and Arizona's Lake Mead, 110 miles long and formed by the Hoover Dam. But at the lake's edge they can see lines in the rock walls, distinct as bathtub rings, showing the water level far lower than it once was—some 130 feet lower, as it happens, since 2000. Water resource officials say some of the reservoirs fed by the river will never be full again.

Climate change will likely decrease the river's flow by 5 to 20 percent in the next 40 years, says geoscientist Brad Udall,

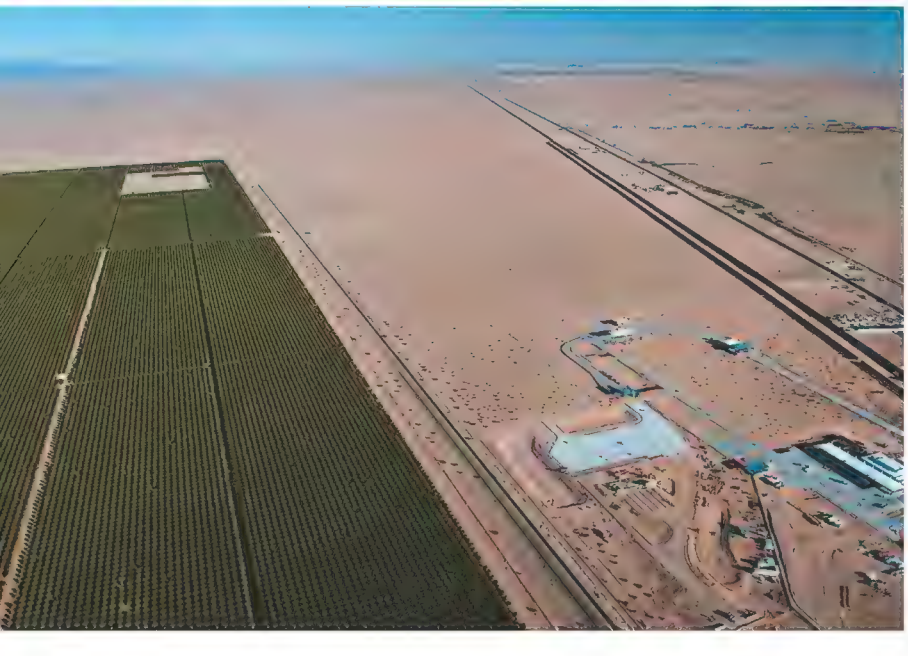
director of the University of Colorado Western Water Assessment. Less precipitation in the Rocky Mountains will yield less water to begin with. Droughts will last longer. Higher overall air temperatures will mean more water lost to evaporation. "You're going to see earlier runoff and lower flows later in the year," so water will be more scarce during the growing season, says Udall.

Other regions—the Mediterranean, southern Africa, parts of South America and Asia—also face fresh-water shortages, perhaps outright crises. In the Andes Mountains of South America, glaciers are melting so quickly that millions of people in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador are expected to lose a major source of fresh water by 2020. In southwestern Australia, which is in the midst of its worst drought in 750 years, fresh water is so scarce the city of Perth is building plants to remove the salt from seawater. More than one billion people around the world now live in water-stressed regions, according to the World Health Organization, a number that is expected to double by 2050, when an estimated nine billion people will inhabit the planet.

"There's not enough fresh water to handle nine billion people at current consumption levels," says Patricia Mulroy, a board member of the Colorado-based Water Research Foundation, which promotes the development of safe, affordable drinking water worldwide. People need a "fundamental, cultural attitude change about water supply in the Southwest," she adds. "It's not abundant, it's not reliable, it's not going to always be there."

Mulroy is also general manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority, which serves two million people in greater Las Vegas. The city is one of the largest in the Colorado River basin, but its share of the river is relatively small; when officials allocated the Colorado's water to different states in 1922, no one expected so many people to be living in the Nevada desert. So Nevadans have gotten used to coping with limitations. They can't water their yards or wash their cars whenever they like; communities follow strict watering schedules. The water authority pays homeowners to replace

The Colorado meanders for nearly 1,500 miles across seven states. Over the past century, the river has been diverted for drinking water, industry and agriculture. (Right, clockwise from top: in a potash mine near Moab, Utah, the water is dyed blue to speed evaporation; a boat casts a forlorn shadow in a dry river channel 25 miles from the river's historical end at the Gulf of California; pistachio trees are irrigated in Arizona; an oxbow reflects a harsh sun south of Kremmling, Colorado.)

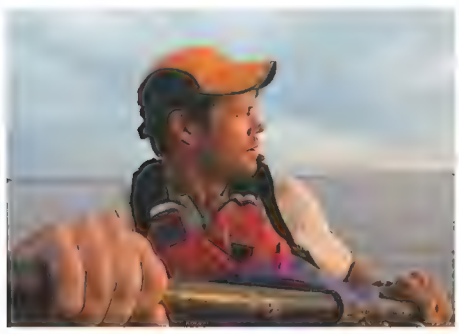


MAP: GUILBERT GATES

water-gulping lawns with rocks and drought-tolerant plants. Golf courses adhere to water restrictions. Almost all wastewater is reused or returned to the Colorado River.

In 1922, conservationist Aldo Leopold paddled a canoe through the great delta at the mouth of the Colorado River. He wrote about a "wealth of fowl and fish" and "still waters . . . of a deep emerald hue." In Leopold's time, the delta stretched over nearly 3,000 square miles; today, it covers fewer than 250, and the only water flowing through it, except after heavy rains, is the runoff from alfalfa, lettuce and melon fields and pecan orchards.

The river has become a perfect symbol of what happens when we ask too much of a limited resource: it disappears. In fact, the Colorado no longer regularly reaches the sea.

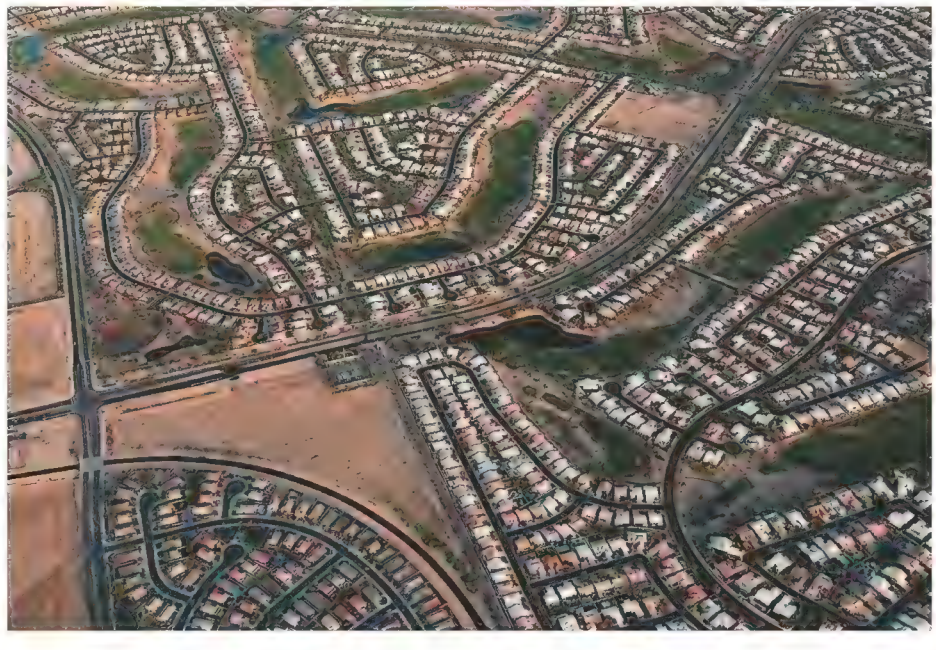


Invasive plants, such as salt cedar and cattails, now dominate the delta, a landscape of seemingly endless mud flats where forests used to stand. And in the Gulf of California itself, shellfish, shrimp and waterfowl have declined dramatically as fresh water has dried up.

Peter McBride has spent two years photographing the great river, paddling a kayak through its headwaters, flying in small planes over cities and fields, rafting through the Grand Canyon and using his own two feet to traverse the delta. In his career, McBride, who lives near Basalt, Colorado, has taken pictures in 50 nations on six continents for magazines, books and films, but he relished the chance to turn his camera on the river that fed his childhood home, a Colorado cattle ranch. "I never knew much about where the river went and where it ended," he says. In his work, McBride depicts not only the extraordinary scale of the human impact on the river but also the considerable beauty that remains.

McBride knew the delta was suffering, but he was surprised when he visited it for the first time. "I spent two weeks walking the most parched, barren earth you can imagine," he recalls. "It's sad to see the mighty Colorado River come to a dribble and end some 50 miles north of the sea."

SARAH ZIELINSKI *is an assistant editor for* SMITHSONIAN. **PETER MCBRIDE**'s *book* The Colorado River: Flowing Through Conflict *will be published in November 2010.*



The population of the American West is expected to grow, putting added pressures on dwindling water resources. (Inset: McBride; right, clockwise from top: a Cocopah Indian surveys what was once the tribe's traditional fishing grounds; Jonathan Waterman, entering the delta, paddled the length of the Colorado River; like many Western communities, Las Vegas has limited watering and restricted the planting of grasses; greater Phoenix continues to expand into the desert.)

See more images of the river at smith.hy.pr/colorado

A WALK THROUGH Old Japan

A TREK DOWN THE KISO ROAD EVOKES THE PLEASURES, AND RIGORS, OF A TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE

BY THOMAS SWICK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHIARA GOIA

"IT IS SO QUIET ON THE KISO that it gives you a strange feeling," Bill read, translating from a roadside sign in Japanese. Just then a truck roared past.

My friend Bill Wilson and I were standing at the northern end of the old Kiso Road, which here has been replaced by modern Route 19. It was a sunny fall morning, and we had taken the train from Shiojiri, passing schoolgirls wearing blue uniforms and carrying black satchels, to Hideshio, a kind of way station between plains and mountains. With backpacks buckled, we had headed off into the hills.

Now we were walking south along the highway, separated by a guardrail from the speeding traffic. For centuries, the 51-mile Kiso Road was the central part of the ancient 339-mile Nakasendo, which connected Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto and provided an inland alternative to the coastal Tokaido road. For centuries, merchants, performers, pilgrims, imperial emissaries, feudal lords, princesses and commoners traveled it. "Murders, robberies, elopements, love suicides, rumors of corruption among the officials," Shimazaki Toson wrote in his epic novel, *Before the Dawn*, "these had all become commonplace along this highway."

Shimazaki's 750-page work, published serially beginning in 1929, depicts the great political and social upheavals of mid-19th-century Japan: a period when foreign ships began appearing off its shores and its people made the difficult transition from a decentralized, feudal society ruled by shoguns to a modernizing state ruled by the central authority of the Meiji

Travelers walked the Kiso Road as early as A.D. 703. Old stones still identify it as part of the Nakasendo, the inland highway connecting Kyoto and Tokyo.

emperor. Shimazaki set his story in his hometown of Magome, one of the Kiso Road's 11 post towns (precursors of rest stops). Hanzo, the novel's protagonist, is based on Shimazaki's father, who provided lodging for traveling officials. In capturing the everyday workings and the rich culture of the inland highway, Shimazaki exalted the Kiso in much the way that the artist Hiroshige immortalized the Tokaido in his woodcuts.

Hiroshige painted the Kiso also (though not as famously), and even from the highway we could see why. Turning our eyes from the cars, we gazed at hillsides of green and muted orange. A lone Japanese maple would flash flaming red, while russet leaves signaled a cherry tree's last autumnal act. Other branches stripped of foliage bore yellow persimmons that hung like ornaments. After an hour and a half of walking, we came to a stand of vending machines outside a train station. The one dispensing beverages (cold and hot) came with a voice that thanked us for our business.

Bill, a translator of Japanese and Chinese literature, had been telling me about the Kiso Road for a long time. A resident of Miami, he had lived in Japan from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s and had already walked the Kiso twice. The road was officially established in 1601, but carried travelers as early as 703, according to ancient records. Bill loved the fact that, unlike the industrialized Tokaido, the Kiso Road remains very well preserved in places. Walking it, he had assured me, you could still get a feeling of long ago.

I had visited Japan once, taking trains from city to city. The idea of traveling on foot with a knowledgeable friend through a rustic landscape in a high-tech country was greatly appealing. The summer before our trip, Bill gave me the itinerary: we'd walk from Hideshio to Magome—about 55 miles—stopping in post towns along the way. We would act as if the automobile had never been invented. Then he suggested I read *Before the Dawn*.

The Kiso Road, traveled by merchants, pilgrims, princesses and imperial emissaries, offered a panorama of Japanese culture.

"I HOPE THERE'S A professional masseuse in Narai," Bill said, once we were walking again. "Or even an unprofessional one."

Twenty minutes later, we got off the highway at the town of Niekawa and then dipped down into Hirasawa, passing lacquerware shops. When residents appeared, we double-teamed them with greetings of *"Ohayo gozaimasu!"* ("Good morning!") Bill had taught me a few words.

A little before noon, Narai appeared in the distance as a thin town stretched along railroad tracks. We found its main street tight with dark wooden houses and day-tripping tourists. The sloping roofs, small shops, cloth banners and unmistakable air of cultural import were like a reward for having arrived on foot. But I doubted that Bill would find a masseuse.

He did find our *ryokan*, or inn, the Echigo-ya. Thin sliding doors open to the street gave way to an entryway with a dirt floor rimming a tatami platform. The innkeeper appeared upon it shortly, a young man in a head scarf who dropped to his knees to tell us at eye level that we were too early to check in. Leaving one's bags never felt so good.

Bill led me to his favorite coffee shop, Matsuya Sabo, a cramped establishment in an antique style. Toy poodles, named Chopin and Piano by the shop's music-loving owners, were in attendance, and a nocturne played softly behind the bar, which was hung with delicate paper lanterns.

The café proprietor, Mr. Imai, told us that in the old days processions would come through town bearing green tea for the emperor. If the tea container shattered, whoever caused the accident would be beheaded. So when a tea procession arrived, everyone stayed indoors without making a sound. Once it passed, they ran into the street to celebrate.

We ate a late lunch of *zaru soba*—the cold buckwheat noodles for which the region is famous—dipping them into a sweetened soy sauce spiked with scallions and wasabi. Outside, standing in the street, Bill pointed to the mountain rising at the southern edge of town. "That's the dreaded Torii Pass," he said, referring to the path we were destined to take over the mountain and employing the adjective he never failed to use when mentioning it.

His idea was that we would climb the mountain the next day—without backpacks—to Yabuhara, where we could take a train back to Narai to spend a second night before catching a morning train to Yabuhara to resume our walk. It struck me as a fine idea, and a historically sound one as well, for in the old days, packhorses were employed to carry belongings.

Dinner was served in our room, on a table with greatly abbreviated legs. Our chairs were limbless, consisting of a back and pillowed seat. Sitting was going to be a bigger problem for me than walking.

In the numerous bowls and plates in front of me sat pink-

MAP: GUILBERT GATES; P. 79 BOTTOM CENTER: THOMAS SWICK

Modernity intrudes on the Kiso Road (above: Route 19 near Narai), but long stretches of it recall Shimazaki Toson's novel of 19th-century life, *Before the Dawn*. In Narai, a shrine (below left) includes statues of Buddhist figures, and villagers lay out produce (below middle) to dry before dinner. The owners of a coffee shop (below right) named their poodles Chopin and Piano.

and-white rectangles of carp sashimi, shredded mountain potato in raw egg and seaweed, three fishes slightly larger than matchsticks, one grilled freshwater fish, a watery egg custard with chicken and mushrooms, boiled *daikon* (radish) with miso, and vegetable tempura.

The richness of the meal contrasted with the sparseness of the room. Bedding would be laid down on the tatami after dinner. There was no TV, but a small black rock sat on an embroidered pillow atop a wooden stand for our contemplation. A framed poem, which Bill translated, hung on one wall:

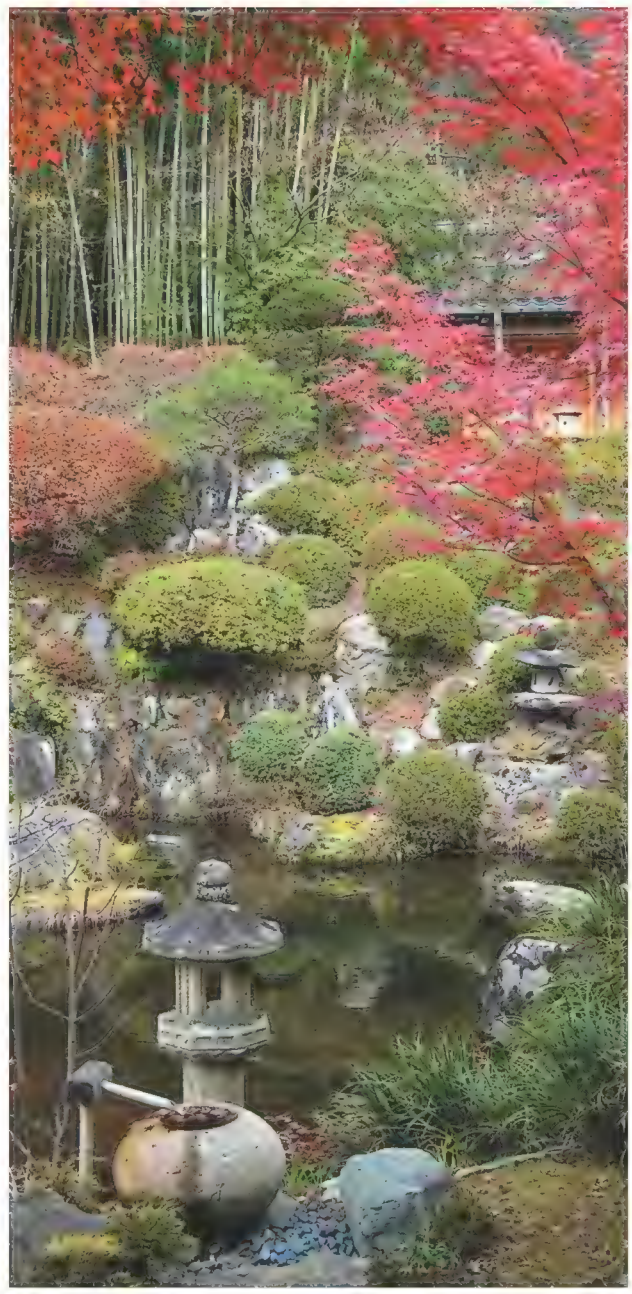
The taste of water
The taste of soba
Everything in Kiso
The taste of autumn

At home I begin my day with a grapefruit; in Japan I exchanged the fruit for a faux pas. Occasionally I would shuffle back to my room still wearing the specially designated bath-

room slippers, which, of course, are supposed to stay in the bathroom. And this morning, the innkeeper asked if we would like tea before breakfast; eager to tackle the dreaded Torii Pass, I declined.

Bill had a brief discussion with the young man and then said to me firmly: "It's the custom of the house." The tea was served with great deliberation. "If you put in super hot water," Bill explained, "you 'insult' the tea." (One insult before breakfast was enough.) And this was *gyokuro*, considered by some to be the finest green tea. Slowly, the innkeeper poured a little into one cup, and then the other, going back and forth in the interest of equality.

After breakfast (fish, rice, miso soup, seaweed), we walked out of town and headed up the mountain. Large flat stones appeared underfoot, part of the Kiso Road's original *ishidatami* (literally "stone tatami"), which had been laid down long ago. I thought of Hanzo and his brother-in-law scampering over this pavement in straw sandals on their way to Edo.



***Shakkei, a* blending of the natural with the man-made, finds expression in a teahouse garden at a Zen temple in Kiso-Fukushima.**

The path narrowed, steepened and turned to dirt. We worked our way through windless woods. (Here—if you ignored my panting—was the quiet we'd been promised.) Switchbacks broke the monotony. Despite the cold air, my undershirt was soaked and my scarf damp.

An hour and a half of climbing brought us to level ground. Next to a wood shelter stood a stone fountain, a ceramic cup placed upside down on its wall. I filled it with water that was more delicious than tea. Bill couldn't remember which path he had taken the last time he was here (there were several) and chose the one that went up. Unfortunately. I had assumed our exertions were over. Now I thought not of Hanzo and his brother-in-law, but rather of Kita and Yaji, the two heroes of Ikku Jippensha's comic novel *Shanks' Mare*, who walk the Tokaido with all the grace of the Three Stooges.

We shambled back down to the shelter and were pointed in the right direction by a Japanese guide leading a quartet of Californians. It took us about 45 minutes to descend into Yabuhara, where we were soon huddled next to a space heater in a restaurant that specialized in eel. A large group of Americans filed in, one of whom looked at us and said, "You're the guys who got lost." News always did travel fast along the Kiso Road.

After taking the train back to Narai, we moved to a *minshuku*, which is like a ryokan but with communal meals. In the morning, the innkeeper asked if she could take our picture for her Web site. We posed and bowed and then headed off in a light rain to the train station, turning around occasionally to find our hostess still standing in the raw air, bowing farewell.

Yabuhara was deserted and wet, our ryokan somber and cold. (Even in the mountains, we encountered no central heating.) We were served a delicious noodle soup in a dark, high-ceilinged restaurant, where we sat at a vast communal table. For dessert—a rare event in old Japan—the chef brought out a plum sorbet that provided each of us with precisely one and a half spoonfuls. Leaving, we found our damp shoes thoughtfully propped next to a space heater.

In the morning, I set off alone for the post town of Kiso-Fukushima. Bill had caught a cold, and the Chuo-sen (Central Line) train—fast, punctual, heated—was always temptingly close at hand. Today he would ride it and take my backpack with him.

At a little past 8 a.m. the air was crisp, the sky clear. I rejoined Route 19, where an electronic sign gave the temperature as 5 degrees Celsius (41 degrees Fahrenheit). A gas station attendant, standing with his back to the pumps, bowed to me as I walked past.

It wasn't exactly a straight shot to Kiso-Fukushima, but it was a relatively flat one, of about nine miles. The second person I asked for directions to the inn—*"Sarashina-ya doko desu ka?"*—was standing right in front of it. A familiar pair of hiking boots stood in the foyer, and a man in a brown cardigan led me along a series of corridors and stairs to a bright room where Bill sat on the floor, writing postcards. The window behind him framed a swiftly flowing Kiso River.

On our way to find lunch, we passed a little plaza where a man sat on the pavement soaking his feet. (This public, underground hot spring had removable wooden covers, and it reminded me of the baths in our inns.) Farther along, a woman emerged from a café and suggested we enter, and so we did. This was a far cry from the gaggles of women who, in the old days, descended upon travelers to extol their establishments.

Kiso-Fukushima was the largest town we had seen since Shiojiri, and I remembered that in *Before the Dawn*, Hanzo walked here from Magome when called to the district admin-

THOMAS SWICK; P. 81 BOTTOM ROW, CENTER AND RIGHT: THOMAS SWICK (2)

The Kiso River (above: near Kiso-Fukushima) parallels the road at intervals; author Thomas Swick (below middle) and his traveling companion, Bill Wilson (below right), went to sleep to the sound of its current at an inn in Kiso-Fukushima. Innkeeper Ando (below left), a shaman of a religion that worships nearby Mount Ontake, took the pair to a fire ceremony at his shrine.

istrative offices. Houses dating to the Tokugawa shogunate (which lasted from 1603 to 1868) lined a street that Bill said was the original Nakasendo. Across the river, the garden at the former governor's house provided a beautiful example of *shakkei*, the practice of incorporating the surrounding natural scenery into a new, orchestrated landscape. The old barrier building—a kind of immigration and customs bureau—was now a museum. Shimazaki wrote that at the Fukushima barrier, officials were always on the lookout for "departing women and entering guns." (Before 1867, women needed passports to travel the Kiso Road; moving guns over the road would have been taken as a sign of rebellion.)

The house next door to the museum was owned by a family that one of the Shimazakis had married into, and a display case held a photograph of the author's father. He had posed respectfully on his knees, his hands resting on thick thighs, his hair pulled back from a broad face that, in shape and expression (a determined seriousness), remind-

ed me of 19th-century photographs of Native Americans.

Back at our minshuku, Bill pointed out a wooden frame filled with script that hung in the foyer. It was a hand-carved reproduction of the first page of the *Before the Dawn* manuscript. "The Kiso Road," Bill read aloud, "lies entirely in the mountains. In some places it cuts across the face of a precipice. In others it follows the banks of the Kiso River." The sound of that river lulled us to sleep.

At breakfast Mr. Ando, the man in the brown cardigan, invited us to a *goma* (fire) ceremony that evening at his shrine. Bill had told me that Mr. Ando was a shaman in a religion that worships the god of Mount Ontake, which Hanzo had climbed to pray for his father's recovery from illness. Shimazaki called it "a great mountain that would prevail amidst the endless changes of the human world." I had assumed he had meant its physical presence, not its spiritual hold. Now I wasn't so sure.

We ate a quick dinner—a hot-pot dish called *kimchi shabu shabu* and fried pond smelts—and piled into the back seat of Mr. Ando's car. I had a strange feeling of exhilaration as I watched houses zip by (the response of the walker who is given a lift). We careered up a hill, at the top of which Bill and I were dropped off in front of a small building hung with vertical banners. Mr. Ando had temporarily ceased shaman service because he had recently become a grandfather.

Inside, we took off our shoes and were given white jackets with blue lettering on the sleeves; the calligraphy was in a style that Bill couldn't decipher. About a dozen similarly garbed celebrants sat cross-legged on pillows before a platform with an open pit in the middle. Behind the pit stood a large wooden statue of Fudo Myo-o, the fanged Wisdom King, who holds a rope in his left hand (for tying up your emotions) and a sword in his right (for cutting through your ignorance). He appeared here as a manifestation of the god of Mount Ontake.

A priest led everyone in a long series of chants to bring the spirit of the god down from the mountain. Then an assistant placed blocks of wood in the pit and set them ablaze. The people seated around the fire continued chanting as the flames grew, raising their voices in a seemingly agitated state and cutting the air with their hands in motions that seemed mostly arbitrary to me. But Bill told me later that these *mudras*, as the gestures are called, actually correspond to certain mantras.

Bill joined in chanting the Heart Sutra, a short sutra, or maxim, embodying what he later said was "the central meaning of the wisdom of Emptiness." I sat speechless, unsure if I was still in the land of bullet trains and talking vending machines.

Each of us was handed a cedar stick to touch to aching body parts, in the belief that the pain would transfer to the wood. One by one, people came up, knelt before the fire and fed it their sticks. The priest took his wand—which, with its bouquet of folded paper, resembled a white feather duster—and touched it to the flames. Then he tapped each supplicant several times with the paper, front and back. Flying sparks accompanied each cleansing. Bill, a Buddhist, went up for a hit.

Afterward, we walked toward our shoes through a thick cloud of smoke. "You know what the priest said to me?" he asked when we were outside. " 'Now don't catch a cold.' "

THE NEXT MORNING WE set out in a light drizzle. The mountains in front of us, wreathed in wisps of cloud, mimicked the painted panels we sometimes found in our rooms.

Despite a dramatic gorge on its outskirts, Agematsu turned out to be an unremarkable town. Our innkeeper, Mrs. Hotta, told us over dinner that men in the area live quite long because they keep in shape by walking in the mountains. She poured us sake and sang a Japanese folk song, followed by "Oh! Susanna." In the morning, she stood outside with only a sweater for warmth (we were wrapped in scarves and jackets) and bowed until we passed out of sight.

After a fairly level hike of about three and a half hours,

ON THE ROAD TO EDO

An excerpt from Before the Dawn, *by Shimazaki Toson (above), reflects life on the Kiso Road in 1856 as the protagonist, Hanzo, sets out for the Japanese capital with his brother-in-law Jeheiji and servant Sakichi.*

TO BE OUT TOGETHER in this way was something special and all three shared the excitement and fascination of the road unfolding before them. Hinoki berries might be drying in front of that shed there, while over here was a mountain country dog, brown and stocky with sharply pointed ears. They laughed often as they walked along discussing these things. If one of them broke a string on his sandals, the other two would wait until the damage was repaired.

Scenes of the deep forest surrounded them. Jeheiji was familiar with the road from Tsumago to Fukushima and Hanzo, too, having taken his father's place when the Magome honjin was summoned to Fukushima, had traveled this road many times. Since Hanzo had grown up observing this road he could tell the condition of the way ahead from the perspiration of the packhorsemen, the porters, and the litter bearers they passed on the way. Flies left over from the previous month swarmed around men and horses alike, another part of the discomfort of travel on the Kiso road.

"How are you doing, Sakichi?"

"My legs are in fine shape. How about you?"

"No trouble at all."

Hanzo, walking beside Juheiji, would occasionally look back at Sakichi to say something and then move on.

Excerpted from *Before the Dawn*, by Shimazaki Toson, translated from the Japanese by William E. Naff. Copyright © 2010. With permission of the University of Hawaii Press. All rights reserved.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

The streets of Tsumago (above) are empty early in the day—before tour buses arrive. After a 10-mile trek into town, the hikers checked into an inn that has been in the same family for 19 generations; the accommodations (below left) were simple; breakfast (below middle) included a heart-shaped egg. Bamboo shoots (below right) were among the produce for sale in local shops.

we reached the town of Suhara around noon. An instrumental version of "Love Is Blue" floated from outdoor speakers. I looked back toward where we had started and saw folds of mountains that looked impenetrable.

Downtown consisted of gas stations and strip malls (Route 19 was still dogging us), and, as it was Sunday, restaurants were closed. We found our minshuku across the river and spent the afternoon in our room (now *I* was catching a cold), watching sumo wrestling on a flat-screen TV. Bill explained the proceedings—he was familiar with most of the wrestlers, a fair number of whom were from Mongolia and Eastern Europe—but it struck me as one sport I did not really need to see in high definition.

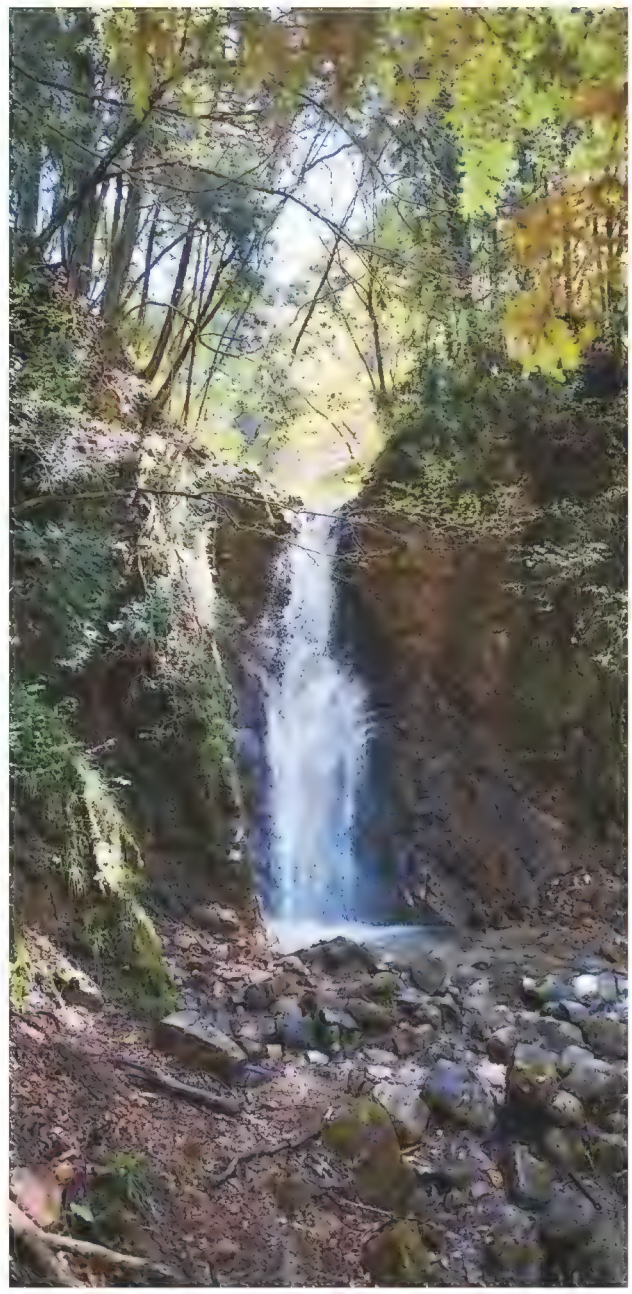
In the morning, outside of town, a woman sweeping leaves said, *"Gamban bei"* ("Carry on") in a country accent that made Bill laugh. The only other time he'd heard the phrase was in a cartoon of Japanese folk tales. Strings of persimmons, and sometimes rows of daikon, hung from balconies. An engraved stone, placed upright atop a plain one, noted that "Emperor Meiji stopped and rested here." At a

small post office I mailed some postcards and was given a blue plastic basket of hard candies in return. The transaction seemed worthy of its own small monument.

WE FOUND MYOKAKUJI TEMPLE on a hill overlooking the town of Nojiri. The former priest's widow gave us a tour of the interior: the statue of Daikoku (god of wealth), the rows of *ihai* (tablets commemorating the dead) and photographs of the 59 men from the village who had died in World War II. Before we left she produced two enormous apples as gifts and a few words of English for us. "May you be happy," she said, with an astonishingly girlish smile. "See you again." Then she stood and bowed till we turned the corner.

The next day's walk to Tsumago—at ten miles, our longest leg—began in a cold rain. There was a final trudge along Route 19, followed by a climb of about a mile that almost made me long for the highway.

Descending into Midono, we splashed into a coffee shop with a dank feeling of defeat. But a plate of zaru soba, and a change of undershirts in a frigid men's room, worked their magic. We hoisted our backpacks and walked out of town.



Legend has it that Miyamoto Musashi, a famed 17th-century swordsman, loved to meditate at the waterfalls between Tsumago and Magome.

The rain, which we had cursed all morning, now washed everything in a crystalline light. We looped past a waterwheel and a shed whose roof was held down with stones, then dropped dreamily into a town of street-hugging houses with overhanging eaves and dark slatted facades. The ancient, unspoiled air reminded us of Narai (as did the busloads of Japanese tourists), but there was something about the contours—the undulating main street, the cradling mountains—that made Tsumago feel even more prized.

Also, it was our last overnight stop before Magome, and the hometown of Shimazaki's mother (and, in *Before the Dawn*, of Hanzo's wife). The *honjin*—the house and inn of her family—was now a museum. You could also visit, down the street, old lodgings for commoners. With their dirt floors extending beyond the entryway, and bare platforms, they made our inns seem regal.

Our ryokan, the Matsushiro-ya, sat on a lane that descended from the main street like an exit ramp into a fairyland. The interior was a taut, austere puzzle of short stairs and thin panels, low ceilings and half-light that befit an inn that has been in the same family for 19 generations. Stretched out on the tatami, I could not have been anywhere but Japan, though in just what century was unclear.

In the morning, along with the usual fish, greens and miso soup, we each got a fried egg in the shape of a heart.

Just off the main street we found a coffee shop, Ko Sabo Garo, which doubled as a gallery selling paintings and jewelry. When I asked what was upstairs, Yasuko—who ran the café with her husband—climbed the steps and, hidden from view, sang a haunting song about spring rain while accompanying herself on the *koto*, a traditional stringed instrument. "That was so Japanese," Bill said of her unseen performance. "Everything indirect, through shades, through suggestion."

After dinner I took a walk. (It was becoming a habit.) Like many small tourist towns, Tsumago emptied by late afternoon, and in the darkness I had the place to myself. Hanging lanterns lent a soft yellow glow to dark shuttered shops. The only sound was the trickle of water.

FOR OUR WALK TO MAGOME, Bill tied a small bell to his backpack—the tourist office sells bells to hikers for warding off bears. Past a pair of waterfalls, we began our final ascent on a path free of predators but thick with the spirit of Hanzo. Of course, this last test for us would have been a stroll for him. And there would have been no restorative tea near the top, served by a man in a conical hat.

"He says we have another 15 minutes of climbing," Bill said, tempering my joy.

And we did. But then we started down, emerging from the forest as well as the mountains; a scenic overlook appeared, from which we could see the Gifu plain far below.

Magome was more open than I had pictured it, its houses and shops tumbling down a main pedestrian street and looking out toward a snow-patched Mount Ena. Because it had been rebuilt after a disastrous fire, the town had the feel of a historical re-creation. A museum to Shimazaki, on the grounds of the old family honjin, offered a library and a film on the writer's life, but less of a feeling of connection than our walk in the woods.

THOMAS SWICK *is the author of the collection* A Way to See the World. *Photographer* **CHIARA GOIA** *is based in Mumbai.*

Magome (above), the last stop on the author's route, was rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1895. Reaching the town after a hard climb, the pair spent the coldest night of their trip at a local temple (below left) in rooms whose walls were literally rice-paper thin. They sought comfort in the grilled rice crackers (below center) and in the garden (below right) just outside their rooms.

At the Eishoji Temple, on a hill at the edge of town, the priest had added a small inn. We were shown the Shimazaki family ihai, and our room, whose walls were literally rice-paper thin.

It was the coldest night yet. I woke up repeatedly, remembering two things from *Before the Dawn*. One was an old saying of the region: "A child is to be brought up in cold and hunger." The other was Hanzo's attempt, near the end of the novel, to burn down the temple in which we now shivered. (He ended his days a victim of madness.) I didn't want to see the temple damaged, but I would have welcomed a small fire.

We set out early the next morning, walking past fields dusted with frost. In a short while we came to a stone marker. "From here north," Bill translated, "the Kiso Road." Added to my sense of accomplishment was a feeling of enrichment; I was emerging from 11 days in a Japan that previously I had only read about. There were no witnesses to our arrival, but in my mind I saw—as I see still—bowing innkeepers, caretakers and gas station attendants.

PRESENCE OF MIND

Philadelphia's Bible Riots of 1844 reflected a strain of anti-Catholic bias and hostility that coursed through 19th-century America.

God and Country

The image of the United States as a bastion of religious tolerance is reassuring—and utterly at odds with the historical record **BY KENNETH C. DAVIS**

WADING INTO the controversy surrounding an Islamic center planned for a site near New York City's Ground Zero memorial this past August, President Obama declared: "This is America. And our commitment to religious freedom must be unshakeable. The principle that people of all faiths are welcome in this country and that they will not be treated differently by their government is essential to who we are." In doing so, he paid homage to a vision that politicians and preachers have extolled for more than two centuries—that America historically has been a place of religious tolerance. It was a sentiment George Washington voiced shortly after taking the oath of office just a few blocks from Ground Zero.

But is it so?

In the storybook version most of us learned in school, the Pilgrims came to America aboard the *Mayflower* in search of religious freedom in 1620. The Puritans soon followed, for the same reason. Ever since these religious dissidents arrived at their shining "city upon a hill," as their governor John Winthrop called it, millions from around the world have done the same, coming to an America where they found a welcome melting pot in which everyone was free to practice his or her own faith.

The problem is that this tidy narrative is an American myth. The real story of religion in America's past is an often awkward, frequently embarrassing and occasionally bloody tale that most civics books and high-school texts either paper over or shunt to the side. And much of the recent conversation about America's ideal of religious freedom has paid lip service to this comforting tableau.

From the earliest arrival of Europeans on America's

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shores, religion has often been a cudgel, used to discriminate, suppress and even kill the foreign, the "heretic" and the "unbeliever"—including the "heathen" natives already here. Moreover, while it is true that the vast majority of early-generation Americans were Christian, the pitched battles between various Protestant sects and, more explosively, between Protestants and Catholics, present an unavoidable contradiction to the widely held notion that America is a "Christian nation."

First, a little overlooked history: the initial encounter between Europeans in the future United States came with the establishment of a Huguenot (French Protestant) colony in 1564 at Fort Caroline (near modern Jacksonville, Florida). More than half a century before the *Mayflower* set sail, French pilgrims had come to America in search of religious freedom.

The Spanish had other ideas. In 1565, they established a forward operating base at St. Augustine and proceeded to wipe out the Fort Caroline colony. The Spanish commander, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, wrote to the Spanish King Philip II that he had "hanged all those we had found in [Fort Caroline] because . . . they were scattering the odious Lutheran doctrine in these Provinces." When hundreds of survivors of a shipwrecked French fleet washed up on the beaches of Florida, they were put to the sword, beside a river the Spanish called Matanzas ("slaughters"). In other words, the first encounter between European Christians in America ended in a blood bath.

The much-ballyhooed arrival of the Pilgrims and Puritans in New England in the early 1600s was indeed a response to persecution that these religious dissenters had experienced in England. But the Puritan fathers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony did not countenance tolerance of opposing religious views. Their "city upon a hill" was a theocracy that brooked no dissent, religious or political.

The most famous dissidents within the Puritan community, Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, were banished following disagreements over theology and policy. From Puritan Boston's earliest days, Catholics ("Papists") were anathema and were banned from the colonies, along with other non-Puritans. Four Quakers were hanged in Boston between 1659 and 1661 for persistently returning to the city to stand up for their beliefs.

Throughout the colonial era, Anglo-American antipathy toward Catholics—especially French and Spanish Catholics—was pronounced and often reflected in the sermons of such famous clerics as Cotton Mather and in statutes that discriminated against Catholics in matters of property and voting. Anti-Catholic feelings even contributed to the revolutionary mood in America after King George III extended an olive branch to French Catholics in Canada with the Quebec Act of 1774, which recognized their religion.

When George Washington dispatched Benedict Arnold on a mission to court French Canadians' support for the American Revolution in 1775, he cautioned Arnold not to let their religion get in the way. "Prudence, policy and a true Christian Spirit," Washington advised, "will lead us to look with compassion upon their errors, without insulting them." (After Arnold betrayed the American cause, he publicly cited America's alliance with Catholic France as one of his reasons for doing so.)

In newly independent America, there was a crazy quilt of state laws regarding religion. In Massachusetts, only Christians were allowed to hold public office, and Catholics were allowed to do so only after renouncing papal authority. In 1777, New York State's constitution banned Catholics from public office (and would do so until 1806). In Maryland, Catholics had full civil rights, but Jews did not. Delaware required an oath affirming belief in the Trinity. Several states, including Massachusetts and South Carolina, had official, state-supported churches.

In 1779, as Virginia's governor, Thomas Jefferson had drafted a bill that guaranteed legal equality for citizens of all religions—including those of no religion—in the state. It was around then

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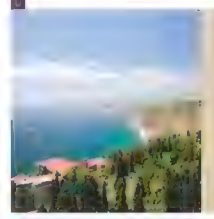

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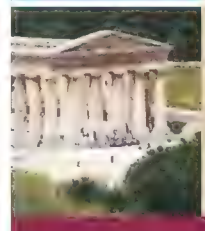

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As governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop (right) led a theocracy that tolerated no dissent.

that Jefferson famously wrote, "But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg." But Jefferson's plan did not advance—until after Patrick ("Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death") Henry introduced a bill in 1784 calling for state support for "teachers of the Christian religion."

Future President James Madison stepped into the breach. In a carefully argued essay titled "Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments," the soon-to-be father of the Constitution eloquently laid out reasons why the state had no business supporting Christian instruction. Signed by some 2,000 Virginians, Madison's argument became a fundamental piece of American political philosophy, a ringing endorsement of the secular state that "should be as familiar to students of American history as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution," as Susan Jacoby has written in *Freethinkers*, her excellent history of American secularism.

Among Madison's 15 points was his declaration that "the Religion then of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every . . . man to ex-

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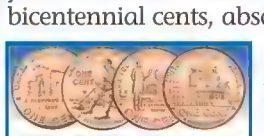

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ercise it as these may dictate. This right is in its nature an inalienable right."

Madison also made a point that any believer of any religion should understand: that the government sanction of a religion was, in essence, a threat to religion. "Who does not see," he wrote, "that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other Sects?" Madison was writing from his memory of Baptist ministers being arrested in his native Virginia.

As a Christian, Madison also noted that Christianity had spread in the face of persecution from worldly powers, not with their help. Christianity, he contended, "disavows a dependence on the powers of this world . . . for it is known that this Religion both existed and flourished, not only without the support of human laws, but in spite of every opposition from them."

Recognizing the idea of America as a refuge for the protester or rebel, Madison also argued that Henry's proposal was "a departure from that generous policy, which offering an Asylum to the persecuted and oppressed of every Nation and Religion, promised a lustre to our country."

After long debate, Patrick Henry's bill was defeated, with the opposition outnumbering supporters 12 to 1. Instead, the Virginia legislature took up Jefferson's plan for the separation of church and state. In 1786, the Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, modified somewhat from Jefferson's original draft, became law. The act is one of three accomplishments Jefferson included on his tombstone, along with writing the Declaration and founding the University of Virginia. (He omitted his presidency of the United States.) After the bill was passed, Jefferson proudly wrote that the law "meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew, the Gentile, the Christian and the Mahometan, the Hindoo and Infidel of every denomination."

Madison wanted Jefferson's view to

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James Madison advocated separating church and state: "Both exist in greater purity, the less they are mixed together."

become the law of the land when he went to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. And as framed in Philadelphia that year, the U.S. Constitution clearly stated in Article VI that federal elective and appointed officials "shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution, but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States."

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It was the recognition of that divisive

JAMES MADISON (1835), AFTER THE ORIGINAL BY GILBERT STUART, ASHER BROWN DURAND / COLLECTION OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY / BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY INTERNATIONAL

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past by the founders—notably Washington, Jefferson, Adams and Madison—that secured America as a secular republic. As president, Washington wrote in 1790: "All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunity of citizenship. . . . For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens."

He was addressing the members of America's oldest synagogue, the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island (where his letter is read aloud every August). In closing, he wrote specifically to the Jews a phrase that applies to Muslims as well: "May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants, while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid."

As for Adams and Jefferson, they would disagree vehemently over policy, but on the question of religious freedom they were united. "In their seventies," Jacoby writes, "with a friendship that had survived serious political conflicts, Adams and Jefferson could look back with satisfaction on what they both considered their greatest achievement—their role in establishing a secular government whose legislators would never be required, or permitted, to rule on the legality of theological views."

Late in his life, James Madison wrote a letter summarizing his views: "And I have no doubt that every new example, will succeed, as every past one has done, in shewing that religion & Govt. will both exist in greater purity, the less they are mixed together."

While some of America's early leaders were models of virtuous tolerance, American attitudes were slow to change. The anti-Catholicism of America's Calvinist past found new voice in the 19th century. The belief widely held and preached by some of the most prominent ministers in America was that Catholics would, if permitted, turn America over to the

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In 1844, an anti-Mormon mob murdered Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum while they were held in an Illinois jail cell.

pope. Anti-Catholic venom was part of the typical American school day, along with Bible readings. In Massachusetts, a convent—coincidentally near the site of the Bunker Hill Monument—was burned to the ground in 1834 by an anti-Catholic mob incited by reports that young women were being abused in the convent school. In Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, anti-Catholic sentiment, combined with the country's anti-immigrant mood, fueled the Bible Riots of 1844, in which houses were torched, two Catholic churches were destroyed and at least 20 people were killed.

At about the same time, Joseph Smith founded a new American religion—and soon met with the wrath of the mainstream Protestant majority. In 1832, a mob tarred and feathered him, marking the beginning of a long battle between Christian America and Smith's Mormonism. In October 1838, after a series of conflicts over land and religious tension, Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs ordered that all Mormons be expelled from his state. Three days later, rogue militiamen massacred 17 church members, including children, at the Mormon settlement of Haun's Mill. In 1844, a mob murdered Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum while they were jailed in Carthage, Illinois. No one was ever convicted of the crime.

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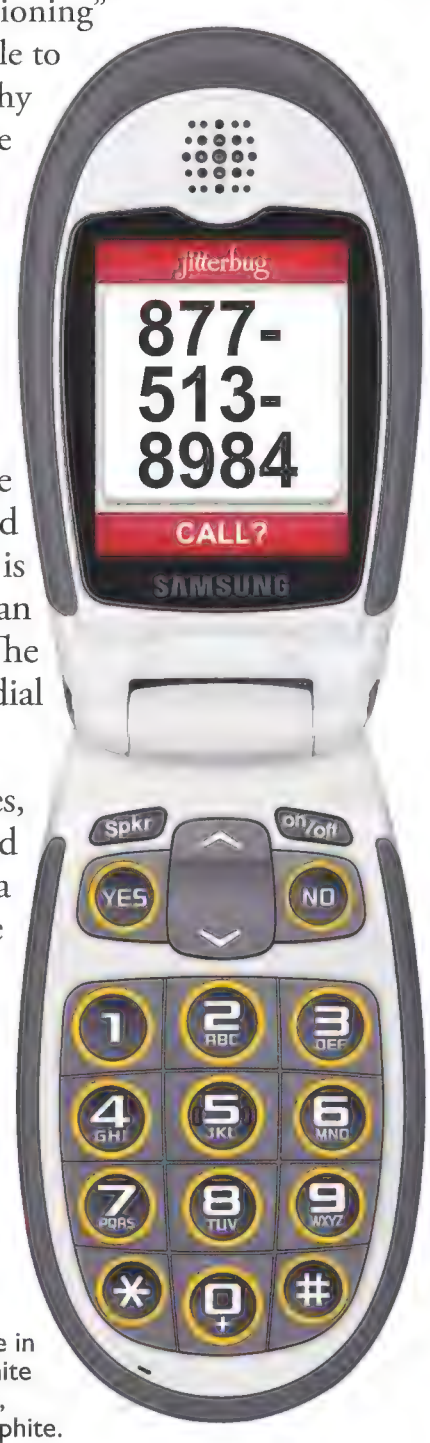

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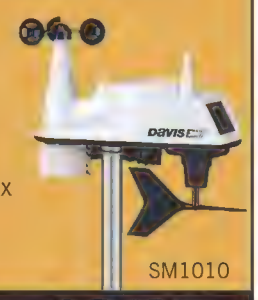

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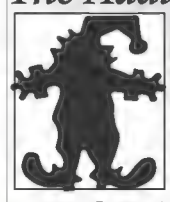

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During the 1944 campaign for president, anti-Semites scrawled hate messages on a shop window in the Bronx, New York.

Even as late as 1960, Catholic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy felt compelled to make a major speech declaring that his loyalty was to America, not the pope. (And as recently as the 2008 Republican primary campaign, Mormon candidate Mitt Romney felt compelled to address the suspicions still directed toward the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.) Of course, America's anti-Semitism was practiced institutionally as well as socially for decades. With the great threat of "godless" Communism looming in the 1950s, the country's fear of atheism also reached new heights.

America can still be, as Madison perceived the nation in 1785, "an Asylum to the persecuted and oppressed of every Nation and Religion." But recognizing that deep religious discord has been part of America's social DNA is a healthy and necessary step. When we acknowledge that dark past, perhaps the nation will return to that "promised . . . lustre" of which Madison so grandiloquently wrote.

KENNETH C. DAVIS *is the author of* Don't Know Much About History *and* A Nation Rising, *among other books.*

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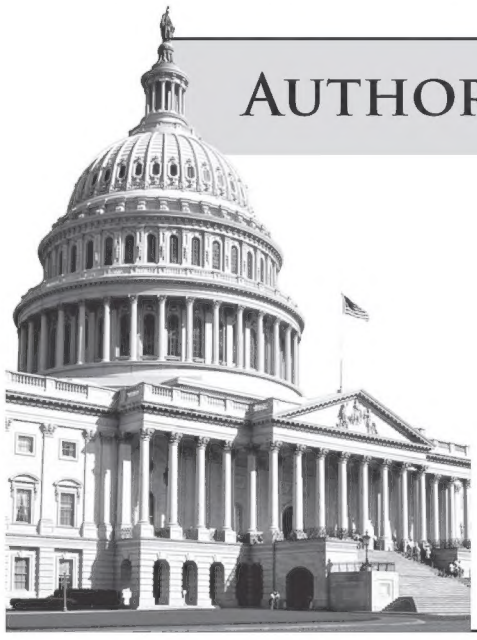

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Concerned persons suggest that unless there is an "*awakening*," government in America's small-government republic will continue being transformed into the large-government, progressive ideology. But what *awakening* is powerful enough to halt the progressive juggernaut of large-government control of what people can and cannot do?

Richard W. Wetherill
1906-1989

The writer would like you to consider that the above ***awakening*** to the existence of a natural law of right behavior ***has that power.*** The law is known as nature's ***law of absolute right.***

For nearly two decades, this behavioral law has often been carefully explained in one-page advertisements in several national magazines and newspapers, and on radio broadcasts. There is also a Website where people worldwide can learn how to get out of trouble, stay out of trouble, and start a new life.

This natural law exerts the power of life and death for every person alive today as is evidenced by the untold trillions of those who previously populated this planet.

"How?" you ask. ***Creation's law of absolute right states: Right action gets right results; wrong action gets wrong results.*** The law defines right action as thoughts and behavior that are rational and honest and fill the need of each situation.

Therefore, people's motivation consisting of man-made laws, judgments, beliefs, likes and dislikes, wants and don't wants does not conform to ***creation's law of absolute right***, and when wrong results occur, people do not look to themselves.

Laws of nature never play favorites. People obey natural laws or they suffer the consequences. ***That*** is the awakening information for this generation. And if some people choose to ignore ***nature's behavioral law***, eventually their wrong action will cause an eternal sleep from which there has been no awakening.

WHOEVER OR WHATEVER IS THE CREATOR revealed this behavioral law to the mind of Richard W. Wetherill in 1929 in answer to his fervent appeal for an understanding of humanity's plight. And although Wetherill took no credit for identifying this law, his efforts to inform people of the flaw in their approach to life met with an almost impenetrable wall of resistance and opposition until he published his book, *Tower of Babel*, on January 2, 1952. Then small study groups were formed near several large cities in America. Later all the members who were able to relocate came together under Wetherill's direction in southeastern Pennsylvania.

So much for a brief history of the group that now brings you the good news of the ***law of absolute right***, and the ***awakening*** that it brings to a world population in deep trouble and chaos.

A few centuries ago the Founding Fathers of America did their best to establish a country ruled in a God-fearing way by representatives of the people. Newcomers from other countries who were willing to be governed by its Constitution and Bill of Rights were welcomed. Over the years, people came in droves. But now the divergence of thinking about if the country should be transformed is causing mounting turmoil and confusion for the populace.

There is only one solution: everybody must obey creation's law of absolute right or suffer the consequences of disobedience to whoever or whatever is the creator of natural laws and all that exists of planet Earth.

Visit our colorful Website www.alphapub.com where several essays and seven books describe the changes called for by whoever or whatever created nature's law of absolute right. The material can be read, downloaded, and/or printed FREE.
This public-service message is from a self-financed, nonprofit group of former students of the late Mr. Wetherill. We invite your help to direct others to our Website so that they can learn that obeying this natural law provides a ***life that is fair and well worth living.***

WARNING: IS YOUR MEMORY FADING?

Breakthrough medical research reveals "forgotten moments" may be caused by "brain starvation"

Be proactive about your brain health. Leading medical researchers reveal discovery that triggers the body's own production of mental 'super fuel' (choline).

Do you remember your first kiss but not where you left your car keys? You're not alone. Millions are discovering that as they age, their short term memory and mental sharpness seem to be slipping. The cause of these inconvenient "gaps" in memory sits deep inside your brain, among the billions of tiny nerve connections. New brain cell growth starts dropping after age 25, and then dramatically after 50, starting a downward spiral that can lead to the embarrassment and frustration of age-related memory loss.

Downward Memory Spiral is Reversible

Studies have shown that the efficiency of brain cells declines after years of free radical damage and stress. It was long believed that as we got older, memory problems were inevitable. But medical experts have revealed that **the downward memory spiral may be helped.** Compelling new research shows that there's a simple way to stimulate new brain cell growth that can boost your memory, improve your focus and restore your mind's mental sharpness.*

Achieve Peak Brain Performance

Challenging mental games aren't enough to build a better brain. Your mind is the most complex and demanding organ in your body. It's also a high-performance supercomputer that requires the right chemical "foods" to perform at its peak.

One of the brain's most important nutrients is choline. Choline is a substance in our body that our brain desperately needs to help manufacture new cells and improve vital neurotransmitters (the basic processes of thinking and memory). Until now, it was believed that there was no way to safely and naturally produce this remarkable mental "superfuel." But after years of extensive research and testing, microbiologists and brain researchers in the U.S., Europe and Israel have developed a way to help boost choline production.

The ingredients in Neurostin help support memory, and help clear "brain fog".*

Are you starving your brain?

If you have experienced one or more of these symptoms, you may benefit from Neurostin™.

- ☑ Do you forget names or dates?
- ☑ Do you sometimes get confused?
- ☑ Do you find it difficult to do more than one thing at a time?
- ☑ Do you often forget why you walked into certain rooms?
- ☑ Do you find it hard to concentrate?

Support Memory and Alertness

The Neurostin® formula is safe and contains no stimulants, ephedra or caffeine. Specific brain-boosting ingredients help improve the synthesis and transmission of neurotransmitters and help improve mental clarity.* This exciting breakthrough discovery is now available in a ***time-release capsule*** called Neurostin® Complex-Memory Pill that is available without a prescription to anyone looking to sharpen their memory. Neurostin® contains a unique combination of antioxidants, botanicals and nutrients to support critical processes for good cognitive function.

Protect Your Memory Now Before It's Too Late

Why wait until your lack of focus or forgetfulness creates an unsafe situation? Today it was your reading glasses, but tomorrow it could be the stove. You forget a phone number today, but tomorrow it could be where you parked your car at the mall.

Just as important is the personal toll that a fading memory can take on your family and friends. Don't you owe it to them and your future to take your brain's fitness as seriously as you do your heart health? It couldn't be easier. You can get back the mental sharpness and focus you had when you were years younger! Act today and unlock your mind's true potential!

How Neurostin™ Works

- **Provides the building blocks** of nerve cell membranes to promote optimal brain cell activity
- **Assists in the production** of acetylcholine, a vital component for improved mental performance
- **Helps relax blood vessels** to increase blood flow for maximum nutrient and oxygen delivery
- **Helps dispatch antioxidants** which inhibit free radical oxidation of nerve cell membranes

Having Trouble Finding Neurostin?

The makers of Neurostin® are so confident that they want to offer you a 30-Day Risk Free Trial, so you can experience the results firsthand.

To get your trial supply of Neurostin® risk free, for just a small shipping and processing fee call 888-221-9092.

Call 888-221-9092 Today For Your 30 Day Risk-Free Trial of Neurostin™ Complex-Memory

Mention Promotional Code NU100106

www.NeurostinDirect.com

** These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to treat, diagnose, cure, mitigate or prevent any disease. Return postage may be required. Neurostin is not endorsed, associated or affiliated in any way with university, hospital or research facility.*

My Big Hang-Up

One man's rage against the dying of civility

BY TED GUP

MY 81-YEAR-OLD MOTHER was sitting solemnly in a pew at Christ Church. It was a memorial service for a 101-year-old friend. In the midst of the pastor's eulogy, my mother's cellphone went off. The ringtone wasn't a dirge by Chopin or Handel but the pulsating beat of "Are You Ready?" sung in full falsetto by the Chipmunks. Her 12-year-old granddaughter, Cassie, had programmed the phone.

Every head in the church turned upon my mother. Poor soul, she didn't even know how to turn it off. Fearing it might erupt again, Mother sat on the phone, hoping to smother it. Seconds later the chapel was again filled with the sound of Chipmunks; it was Cassie calling to see if one of her friends might catch a ride home from school.

Like me, my mother was not quite ready for the communication revolution. As a teacher of journalism, I tell myself that all this connectedness is the link that joins the Family of Man. But in my quieter moments (of which there are now not many), I see we've created a nation of zombies—heads down, thumbs on tiny keyboards, mindless millions staring blankly, shuffling toward some unseen horizon. To them, the rest of us are invisible. Not long ago, a colleague was startled to see a young woman approaching; she had been too absorbed in her texting to notice the words "Men's Room" on the door. For one brief shining moment, she was at a loss for words.

These days, I, too, carry a cellphone clipped to my belt, hoping the pod people (er . . . iPod people) will mistake me for one of their own. But I rarely turn it on. Judging from all the urgency around me, I alone seem to have nothing to say, nothing that demands I communicate that instant. I await no call, text or e-mail of such import that it couldn't be served as well with a stamp and a complete sentence, both of which seem destined for history's dustbin.

For many, wandering off the grid is death itself. Legend has it that when evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson died in 1944, she was buried with a connected telephone so she could alert the world to her resurrection. (Of such stories, journalists say: "Too good to check.") This generation may well choose to be entombed with their BlackBerries, ready to text that final OMG! from the other side.

IMO ("In My Opinion") we've gone too far. Not everything has to be shared the moment it is conceived. (We cover our mouths when we cough, why not when we think?) I say any thought that doesn't have a shelf life beyond five seconds is best left unarticulated. Alexander Graham Bell liked keeping in touch as much as the next guy, but during the ceremony following his death on August 2, 1922, telephones across North America were silenced in tribute to their inventor. Quaint as that may sound today, I wonder if a little silence and some self-restraint might be in order. Like my poor mother, it seems few of us now know when or how to turn it all off. Perhaps the Chipmunks asked the right question: "Are you ready?" For me, the answer is "No way."

TED GUP *is professor and chair of the journalism department at Emerson College in Boston. He is the author of several books.*

ERIC PALMA